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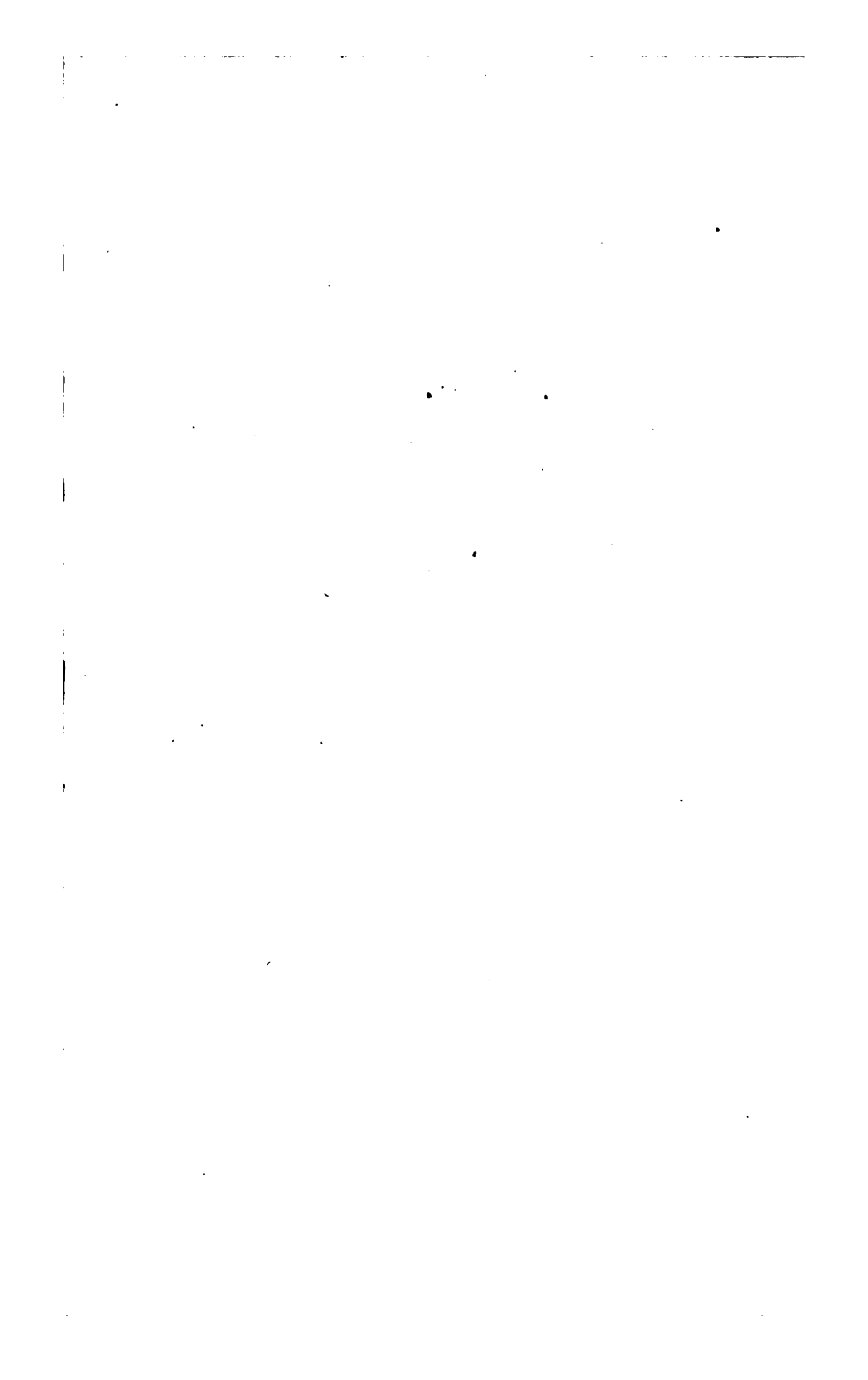
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THE
SPIRIT OF THE BOOK
OF
COMMON PRAYER,

AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE
S A C R A M E N T S ,
AND OTHER
RITES AND CEREMONIES OF THE CHURCH,



ACCORDING TO THE USE OF THE
United Church of England and Ireland:

BY A CLERGYMAN.

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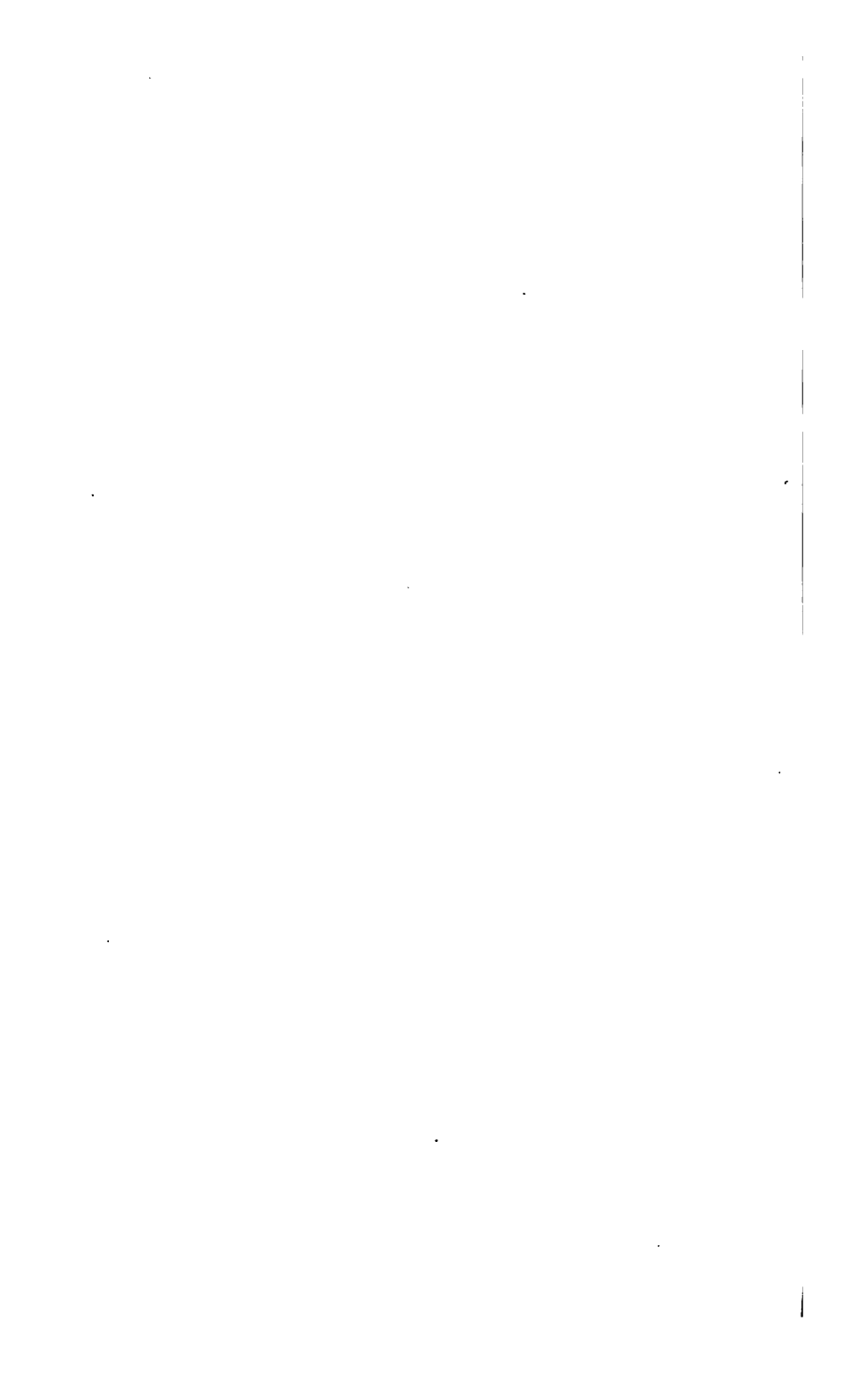


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## INTRODUCTION.

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THE whole service of the United Church of England and Ireland consists of the Book of Common Prayer, the Administration of the Sacraments, and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church ; the Bidding Prayer and the Sermon, Lecture, or Homily, together with the Psalter or Psalms of David, printed as they are to be sung or said, and a few Hymns.

And this whole service of the United Church is made up of sentences of Holy Writ ; of adoration to the Deity in the form of prayer, praise, and thanksgiving ; together with the confessions of faith, the confessions of sins, and the absolutions.

But in this portion of the comment of the Spirit of the Book of Common Prayer no notice will be taken of the Psalter, or of the Hymns, or of the Bidding Prayer ; for although the Bidding Prayer is a prayer of high con-

sideration, yet, as the Morning and Evening Services are deemed to be concluded void of this prayer, and because at those times when there is no sermon, lecture, or homily; it cannot be used on this account it would be out of order as under the head of any particular service. So also the Hymns and the Psalter are passed over for the present, as consisting of praise and thanks, rather than of prayer in its abstract sense of petition and entreaty.

Of the confessions of faith as contained in the Creeds, these will merit much attention in due course.

With regard to the Litany, it always was and is intended to be a separate service, and therefore the Litany will be treated of as such; and the Holy Communion or the Administration of the Lord's Supper, the Administration of Public Baptism of Infants, the Administration of Private Baptism of Children in houses, the Ministration of Baptism to such as are of riper years and able to answer for themselves, the Catechism, the Order of Confirmation, the Form of the Solemnization of Matrimony, the Order of the Visitation of the Sick, the Communion of the Sick, the Order of the Burial of the Dead, the Thanksgiving of Women after Childbirth, the Commination, Prayers to be used at Sea, the Form of Prayer to be used on the Fifth of November, as also

those to be used on the Thirty-first day of January and on the Twenty-ninth day of May, the Form of Prayer on Accession to the British Throne; all these separate services, or connected with parts of the Morning Service, will be subjects of consideration hereafter.

With the above Services and Forms the members of the Church of England and Ireland at times find themselves united as attendants: as for instance, by being called upon as sponsors at the baptism of their relations or friends, or at the grave, although not by any means regular in their attendance upon the public worship of their God and Saviour either on the Sabbath or upon other days appointed to be observed by the Church. Hence, therefore, it will be well to extract *the spirit* of the separate services and forms in order to quicken and enliven what may not be improperly termed the dormant spirit of nominal Christians; whilst it is far, very far from the Author of the Spirit of the Book of Common Prayer, in any words he may use, to "cry aloud and spare not," when he says it is to be feared that many church-going persons are in the habit of repeating the Prayers of the Church as from custom, thus making the service a mere labial performance, the powers of the mind being absent from actual service required, and that others are content with the joining in the response of Amen.

For such reasons, therefore, does the Author venture to intrude this little work upon the Public for the reading and meditation of the members of the Church of England and Ireland, that every one in his vocation and calling, when they hear the Prayers read, may, in such wise, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that all may pray with the spirit and with the understanding, with such powerful effect as to bring down the Divine blessing in aid of the power to obtain those things which are necessary both for the soul and body.

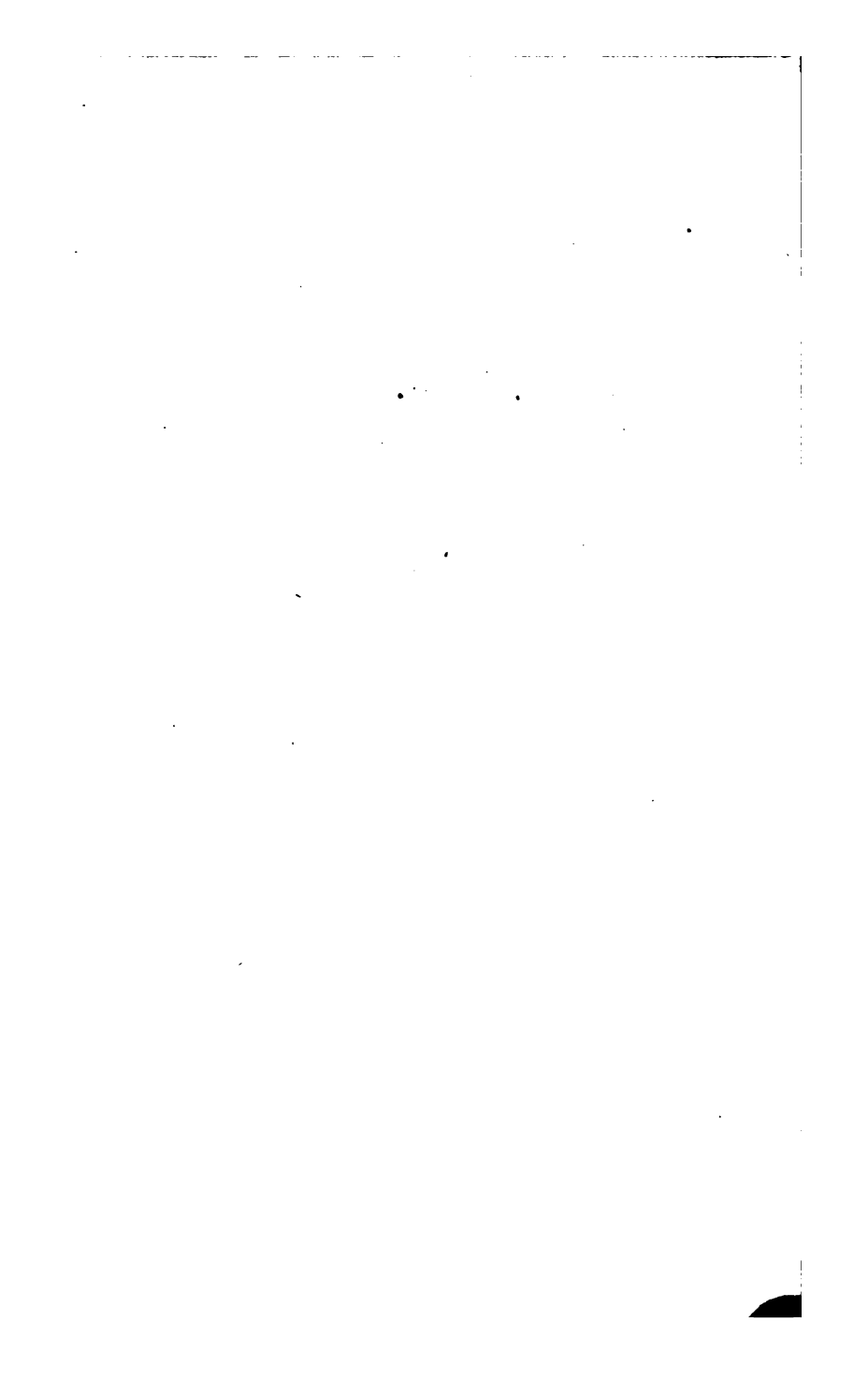
And it will be to notice in this place that no observations will be made with regard to the period when the whole or any portion of the several services of the Church of England and Ireland were framed, or by whom the Prayers were composed, how collected, or by what authority published; nor any comment introduced as to the orders given for the directions of the Minister in the use of them; for so many questions having arisen of late respecting the Forms of the Established Church and the administration of her services, that the words of our blessed Saviour may truly be applied here, "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof;" so also sufficient is it to bring to the recollection of the members of the Catholic Church that it is the spirit of the prayer which is so greatly needed in the present day, by which its members can alone hope for the blessing of God Al-

mighty on both the priesthood and the laity; that the spirit of prayer is that which heightens the supplication, elevates the offering, and in truth and effect and in very deed constitutes the essence of prayer. Hence laying aside all hypocrisy, as new-born babes let every member of the Holy Catholic Church desire the sincere milk of prayer, that all may thereby grow in the grace of our holy religion.

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*few minutes* ere the Minister rises from his seat: for, be it remembered, that all the sentences which are in use upon these occasions when the congregation arise from *their* seats reverently to hear **THE WORDS** which the Minister may pronounce, are not merely to be reckoned as the expressions of men, but as the **WORDS OF GOD**, given by inspiration; or the Divine breathing or impression upon the minds of holy persons; and are profitable for instruction in righteousness.\* Nor are they to be received otherwise than as sentences uttered by the Ministers of God's holy catholic Church; who, in their high calling, whilst in the immediate service of the Church, become the appointed servants to awaken *you*, through the power of the Holy Spirit, who may be about to make one of a congregation, to a true sense of your own condition—your actual course of life—your common conversation—your follies, weaknesses, errors, and that general body of sin so common to humanity: yes, of that portion of sin only conceived in thought, as well as of that portion brought into action; thereby expelling from the mind all worldly considerations; and by such process preparing it for heavenly aspirations. Hence it must be mockery of the highest stamp before HIM, the OMNIPOTENT and OMNISCIENT, whenever *any one of the congregation* exhibits inattention or levity of behaviour whilst in that house dedicated to the solemn worship of the Almighty, and called **THE HOUSE OF PRAYER**,† *at any hour, but especially so when the service of that Church has commenced*, in which the people assembled present themselves as willing members of the universal household of faith, and amongst whom, if there be only two or three

\* 2 Timothy, iii. 16.

† Isaiah lvi. 7.

worshipping God in faith and fear, there is the SAVIOUR of mankind, JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD, by his SPIRIT, in the midst of them.

To apply the reasoning already introduced, should the Minister read aloud "*When the wicked man* (which is intended to pertain to any person who fears not the DEITY by keeping his commandments, or endeavouring so to do,) *turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive,*"\* as the Prophet Ezekiel was authorized by the LORD JEHOVAH, OMNIPOTENT, to say; then should you, who are privileged with being a hearer of so gracious a conditional decree, at once reflect upon the errors of your life, upon those things thought of as well as actual wicked deeds, and especially of those lately transacted, in order that a direct and positive turning away from the evil which has beset you may take place immediately; tacitly desiring God's blessing on your resolution; that you, being willing to turn, may be turned from evil of thought and from all wickedness, and by such actual conversion your reasonable soul may be guided by the HOLY SPIRIT, and your body become a tabernacle clothed with meekness and prepared for salvation before the time of death arrives. Or should the next sentence be used by the Minister, "*I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me,*"† as David has left on record, let not the bare reading of so solemn a confession be as corn sown on stony ground which withereth before it be grown up; but let it search the heart and the reins, and become a monition from your heavenly FATHER whom you are about to worship in sincerity and truth;

\* Ezekiel xviii. 27.

† Psalm li. 3.

proclaiming this to yourself, have I kept the whole law of my God?—have I not sinned wilfully and grievously both in thought and deed?—amongst the commandments of the Lord is there one on which I have made no trespass? and be not willing to lull thy conscience; let sin, yea, every sin, find thee out. Indeed, try rather to remember those duties you have neglected; what iniquity you have been guilty of, wilfully and wittingly, without ever trying to resist the temptation. Moreover, ask yourself whether you bear any malice or hatred in your heart. In short, examine and prove your own self, and endeavour to search out what manner of spirit you are of. And should conviction flash upon your mind, boldly asserting that on this thing I am guilty, darting quick and vivid as lightning, encourage it, for it is the HOLY POWER of God—the HOLY GHOST which convinceth of sin: and this is the awakening of the reasonable soul to the neglect of duties you owe to God and your neighbour, and to that state of iniquity which your transgressions have loaded upon you: hence, then, cherish the direction your reason has taken, and whatever of evil may present itself before you, whether it be more or less with regard to the common measure or weight of sin, making your own calculation of the enormity of any crime, not according to the die cast upon it by mankind, but according to that scale with which you have been taught and believe the righteous and eternal Judge weighs every sin, viz, as a breach of his holy and perfect laws—as an offence committed against Himself. Or if it be this sentence which is read, “*Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities,*”\* (David’s words

\* Psalm li. 9.

also,) receive them as an invocation to the Deity for mercy from the Minister on your behalf; that whereas every thought, word, and deed being known to thy God, from whom no secrets are hid, and *you* being conscious of some iniquity, or at least of a falling off from the favor of the Lord, although it may be hidden from the world, thus deserving wrath from thy Maker: fear being thus excited, lest the righteous Judge should close the Book of Life against thee, let thine heart pour forth such an earnest supplication as may cause thy holy Saviour, who ever maketh intercession with the Father, to intercede on your part, that thine offences may be blotted out.

If the fourth sentence be called into use,\* which is composed of the Psalmist's words likewise, "*The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise;*"\* wherein those sacrifices which mankind can offer are laid open, such as the Father, God, the Almighty Judge, requires, and will in mercy accept from every child who is truly willing to become his faithful servant. The forgiveness of trespass against our brethren is often purchased between man and man by entreaty, interest, goods, and gold; but the Father of Christians, against whom every trespass and sin is scored as done to Himself, has told all men that not all of worldly offering can make the least propitiation for one sin; alone then does it remain with the power of mind, which having become carnal or worldly, and has petitioned for and received the change from that which is carnal to that which is spiritual, alone is it for the power of reason, thus changed, to

\* Psalm li. 17.

bring forth the fruits of repentance and godly sorrow not to be repented of. It was the mind which first conceived sin, it is the mind which must offer the only sacrifice which man can offer for sin. It is the heart bursting with the sorrow of sin, weighed down by the oppression of iniquity, which the righteous and merciful Father will not despise. Dost *thou* feel the truth of these things? Hast *thou* ever been sensible of such lively sorrow for sin? If thou hast, be ye thankful, and merciful because your Father in heaven has been merciful unto you: if not thus alive to God's favor, *seek it by prayer.*

The next text is from the Prophet Joel, "*Rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.*"\* Here is plain instruction: rend your heart and not your garments: and although it be somewhat repugnant to human nature, yet is the breaking up of worldly notions of godliness declared to be more effectual in the highway of repentance than all the pharasaical robes of external sorrow. Princes and holy men of old covered themselves with sackcloth and ashes to show their humility; much more should the disciple of Christ, with his superior knowledge, be most humble of heart. Hast *thou* offended? Humility of soul and body is required for such falling off: but if thou hast greatly offended against the Lord thy God, depend on it as truth, that no one so degraded before his Maker can possess a heart too sincere in the low estate of humbleness of heart. And remember, that outward appearances of either humility or sorrow append not themselves to real christian principles, because

\* Joel ii. 13.

each are of the grace of God, and both are of the heart and not of externals. Thus sorrow is a bemoaning of the rational soul : it is deep seated lamentation : lamentation followed by amendment of life : the actual change from the delight of doing evil to the delight and purpose of doing good in thought and action. It is the searching after this true conversion by supplication to the Throne of Mercy, through the intercession of the Lamb of God, Christ Jesus, which reconciles sinful man to his Father God, and the Father Omniscient Judge of mankind ; and thus, and thus alone, is the condemnation all deserve as sinners turned away from us. Is *thine* heart softened by adversity, humbled by misfortune, or melted through sickness and disease ? Be ye patient : it is the work of that Perfect One who is slow to anger and of great kindness. Is *thine* heart still hardened ? Mark it well and receive it as truth, sin deceives thee. Art *thou* living in any known and open iniquity ? Thou art not in favor with thy Maker : thou hast not aught of the Grace of thy Saviour : thou hast a carnal mind and art not yet fitted for the kingdom of heaven. Hasten then to rend *your* heart. Think less of your worldly garment : for although you may be in the midst of life, much more of time may not be your portion.

A verse from the Prophet Daniel is not unfrequently read, "*To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him ; neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us.*"\* Now upon the hearing of these words, if they make no impression upon *your* understanding touching the mercies and forgivenesses of the Lord thy God towards thyself, and no conviction of sin presents itself,

• Daniel ix. 9, 10.

depend upon the truth of this assertion also, that the seed of the Word of God, more particularly that which was cast forth by Christ, has been sown, as far as it has pertained to yourself, upon stony ground, and has hitherto brought forth no fruit meet either for true repentance or moving gratitude. Surely *thou* doubtest not of the goodness, mercy, or forgiveness of thy God; nevertheless much is it to be lamented if it should so be that either the pleasures of the world or an inconsiderate life have obscured the glory of these attributes from your contemplation. Look back then upon thine existence, the narrow escapes from most grievous temptations to sin, from the precipices of accidents, misfortune, disease, it may be death itself, from which thou hast been carried away and preserved. What hath kept thee amidst these things but the providence of thy Saviour, God: and now, even now, thou art alive, and with thy reason empowered to consider of the loving-kindness and forgiveness of thy mighty Protector, unworthy as thou art to be a partaker of any token of fatherly affection. Does it not then become *thee* to worship the Lord thy God with all thanks, meekly prostrating the whole of mind and body whenever your conscience bids thee so to do, and thus render unto Him who made thee superior to all other creatures that spirit of reason and that frame of humanity which the Lord thy God called into existence, that both soul and body, as one human being, might worship in spirit, in faith, and in fear?

A text from Jeremiah is at times read by the Minister, "*O Lord, correct me, but with judgment; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing.*"\* Here we have a prayer and such as any one may use, in addition

\* Jeremiah x. 24.

to others, upon setting our foot at the entrance of the House of Prayer. The sentence forms a request that our Heavenly Father, under the impression that we deserve punishment, would prove to us his affection by dispensing some tender infliction; that having gone astray from the narrow path which leadeth unto life eternal, we may be brought back to serve Him truly, and flee from iniquity and destruction. All correction is grievous; yet is there a vast difference between that which we have apparently brought upon ourselves and the tender mercies of our God for the same purpose. Have *you* been a prodigal, and your Heavenly Father has called you home by some marked and merciful punishment, great and manifest has been the love of God toward *you*: be not slothful therefore in acknowledging your transgressions with meekness and sorrow, in full confidence that, although you still continue to do that which is not lawful and right, and hourly deserve the wrath of thy God, yet that he will not correct you as if the mercy of a Saviour and the Spirit of adoption, whereby those who believe in Him as the Trinity in Unity cry Abba Father, were not in the Unity of the Godhead.

The following sentence is taken from the words of John the Baptist, "*Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*"\* Imagine, when the Minister utters "Repent ye," John, the fore-runner of Christ, with all the pure and holy fervency of true piety, proclaiming to those who heard him, what, under a Divine commission he believed to be, necessary to salvation. Have not the same words been uttered to *you*? and with what effect?

\* Matthew iii. 2.



May it be for good. But attend to it a little longer. "Repent ye," or do *ye* repent? and why? because the jewel of great price is before you—the Gospel—the revelation of God's mercy by and through Jesus Christ; thus promulgating the means by which you can alone obtain the kingdom of heaven—peace present and eternal—the felicity of being with Christ as the Lord God; Jehovah and Christ being with your spirit. Whilst then you hear and have power to meditate on such words, behold the highway to heaven, repentance, is for you to walk in; the door of heaven itself, Christ, is open by which you may enter. Learn also that to morrow the same door may be closed against you, the highway itself obscured, and the day passed. Cease ye then from man whose breath is in his nostrils;\* cease ye from the habits and conversation of those whose ways are not of righteousness nor for peace; because your time may cease, and ye know not the hour when it is decreed it shall cease; neither be vain in your own conceits and say I am righteous, I am strong, healthy, and young; rather learn and believe the truth, that every one need to turn from evil; that some portion of evil is in the heart and disposition of all mortals; that repentance is the fruit of vital faith in Christ; and that God hath declared he would not the death of a sinner, that he has invited *you* and others, through Christ, to go unto him—"Come unto me" are his words: for one moment therefore reject not the gracious invitation, but follow the prodigal's example if sin abounds; if not, resolve, with God's aid, (for which, ask by prayer,) to imitate Christ; that the

\* Isaiah ii. 22.

cup of nature, of which you have participated, may be made clean for you.

In the next quotation of holy Scripture let your heart be with the words as they are pronounced, "*I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am not worthy to be called thy son.*"\* And now, whether you be son or daughter in the Church of Christ by baptism, put this question to yourself, is it necessary for me to go to my God and say I have sinned? To find a solution to this inquiry, turn your thoughts to the Ten Commandments which God spake, and also to that one which the Son of God spake, "Do this in remembrance of me." If it be that your conscience charge you with no particular breach of these commands, yet it may be that you have transgressed each in some common and general way; by which is meant, that although you may not have fallen down before an idol for the purpose of adoration, yet it is possible that *your* thoughts may have been so completely overwhelmed with the pleasures or profits of the world as to have prevented your rendering a full and perfect worship to the only wise God and Saviour; and hence you have given that time and power of your reason to the world which should have been rendered first to Him. Has not the world in this case been an idol to you? Or if it be of the Seventh Commandment you would consider, although you may not have broken the Law by the actual commission of the crime, nevertheless, in the application of our Lord's words to the case, provided you have regarded any person in such manner as to incite in your carnal appetites those desires

\* Luke xv. 11, 18.

which are contrary to the dictates of the Holy Spirit, you have already committed adultery in your heart. Or should it be of the Eighth Commandment you would examine yourself, although you may not positively have robbed your neighbour of any one thing valuable in the sight of man in your youth, if since that period you have possessed yourself privily of the least thing to which you had no legal right, or even if you have only coveted the same, you may have trespassed against two other laws of the Divine Lawgiver. If then you are thus convinced of sin, what shall you give as the ransom of your guilty reasonable soul? It is not in your power to make any offering which shall be so pure as to be acceptable to God. All things are His, and not your's, would you tender earthly possessions: but you may go to God in and through the Mediator, Jesus Christ, and acknowledge, in confession, whatever of offence is written against thee by the condemnation of your reasoning faculty, and there, in the holy presence of your merciful Father, you may, you will, be received, *being penitent*.

*"Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified:"* thus pure and holy is the Lord: thus impure and unholy is every one born after the flesh. This sentence is very commonly in use by the Minister. Upon your hearing it, then, if it should be that God's grace has been so efficient as to preserve you in that comparative state of purity which adorns the most blessed of mankind, yet search out *your own* common failing; perhaps of temper, or of conversation, for every one has some besetting, beguiling, propensity to evil; the temptation to which is so forward and pressing that many are overcome by it, and

scarcely do they know the daily and hourly commission of it to be sin in the sight of God. Forget not therefore that the Lord Omniscient has perfect knowledge of the least of thy sins, although you may for a season count it but a little matter. Moreover, be mindful of the many omissions of duties, as of the commission of actual crimes, and that *thou* art called in your christian vocation to be a true and faithful servant; and likewise that the very absence of *firm* reliance, of sincerity in professions, and truth are no small offences: and again, that if thou art not under the grace of thy God and Saviour, and he has already entered into judgment against thee, it must be for condemnation. The prayer of this sentence therefore is that the Almighty Father, thy Creator, would not look upon thee as the child of Adam, born in sin and living by nature under its influence, but as the child of Grace, baptized into the new birth and thereby the humble servant of His immaculate Son Jesus Christ, and with the blood of His perfect atonement, anointed through the power of the Holy Spirit, with the outward and visible sign of the cross, and so received into the covenant of grace, and thus being a partaker of Christ's holy religion, the Almighty Judge of all men is not set against thee as the righteous Judge, a jealous God, but as the Almighty Redeemer, a merciful Father, the God ready to pardon, gracious, slow to anger, and of great kindness.\*

The last text is from the General Epistle of St. John, "*If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*"† It is certain all have sinned: this holy

\* Nehemiah ix. 17.

† 1 John i. 8. 9.

Scripture declares: who then doubts the assertion? But for the sake of conviction, who is there that will look back and from the youthful period upwards cannot trace sin in thought if not in deed? Art thou then passing days and years without any violence of sin, and so partially innocent as to live in a certain degree of purity and love towards God and man? yet, although in this state of grace, you cannot say that you are without sin, especially if thou hast broken one of the least of the commandments of thy Maker. Attempt not, therefore, to hide sin from thyself, for thus seeking to avoid self-condemnation you not only deceive yourself, but the truth which is of God, and is divulged in the holy words spoken by Christ and his Apostles cannot possibly take any effect upon *you* towards your conversion from evil unto righteousness. Now the Almighty requires, on our parts, humility and condescension. Are these qualities alive in us when our hearts are full of pride, or so hardened as to oppose an acknowledgement of our own iniquity? Be therefore free to confess, as we may well do one to another, but most certainly unto the Lord from whom alone you can receive forgiveness; and so confessing your sins, the Lord God, Jesus, the Intercessor, Mediator, and Redeemer, is faithful and just, according to his many promises, and by means of the almighty sacrifice, to forgive *you your sins*, and to *cleanse you*, by the perfect purity and sanctity of his blood, which, as a true believer, was shed for thee, and his body which was given for thee, yes! He will cleanse you from all unrighteousness, and will also grant you his Holy Spirit to keep you from sin.

## THE EXHORTATION.

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ONE or more of the sentences having been read by the officiating Minister, as the ambassador of God to his people, the Church, he now proceeds to exhort the congregation as brethren—brethren of the Christian Church—brethren dearly beloved in the Lord; yes, as those dearly beloved brethren, many of whom, probably, have grown up under his spiritual tuition and guidance, and with whom he has been long acquainted; or, should it be that you are personally unknown to him, yet as Christians and fellow workers with him in Christ: and if it be that he is only officiating for the occasion, still considering his calling, his ministration, *you* and the whole of the assembled people rise up before him, one body in unity, for this special purpose, to worship the only true God: a body for whom the Minister must feel the greatest interest, and therefore it is most appropriate that he should address you in the affectionate terms of dearly beloved brethren. And the Minister tells you that the Scripture, the writings of holy men, dictated by, and in no small number of passages the very words of, God himself: yea, the Minister *informs you* that the Bible, which contains the WILL OF GOD with regard to all things necessary for the salvation of mankind, moveth us, Christians, in sundry places, to acknowledge and confess our manifold sins and wickedness, in sentences such as the following: "*Only acknowledge thine iniquity,*

*that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God.*"\*—  
*"We acknowledge, O Lord, our wickedness, and the iniquity of our fathers: for we have sinned against thee."*†—"And it shall be, when he shall be guilty in one of these things, that he shall confess that he hath sinned in that thing."‡  
 Moreover, Scripture being given us as a light by which we may be able to behold ourselves truly as we stand in God's sight, therefore *you* are exhorted to enter upon the duty of confession not solely as one of that body of Christians who are perfectly unable to justify themselves in the pure and most holy presence of their God and Maker, but also upon *your own account*, as one who has offended against the rules which He, the CREATOR, has given *you for your walk in life*. And again, *you* are exhorted not to dissemble nor cloak your sins and wickedness before the face of the OMNISCIENT AND HEAVENLY FATHER; for in vain will it be for you to attempt to hide what it is impossible for you to screen; and *you yourself*, and every one of every congregation, having fallen short of, and lost, the glory which GOD THE CREATOR designed should belong to mankind, are further called upon to confess *your* sins with a humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart, as holy Scripture invites you to do; for "*God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble:*"§ and "*Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out:*"|| for "*to obey is better than sacrifice.*"\*\*

But confession may be made in private and in public, viz, in the closet, to the Priesthood, and amidst the congregation of assembled Christians; and both private and

\* Jeremiah iii. 13.

† Jeremiah xiv. 20.

‡ Leviticus v. 5.

§ James iv. 6.

|| Acts iii. 19.

\*\* 1 Samuel xv. 22.

public confessions are required: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.\* *"I acknowledged my sin unto thee.†"*—*"When thou prayest, enter into thy closet."*‡—*"Confess your faults one to another."*§—*"Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them."*|| And at the assembled numbers of Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan for baptism by Jesus, the PEOPLE CONFESSED their sins.\*\* So that, would *you* desire truly the mercy of the LORD MOST HIGH, at once resolve to withhold not one tittle either of thought, word, or deed which you can bring to remembrance bearing with it the character or stamp of sin, to the end that you may obtain forgiveness of those sins you may have committed, by His infinite goodness and mercy. In this place let it be also observed, that from those passages of Scripture above quoted, as also from others, that repentance and amendment of life can scarcely take place before confession of sins has been made, either privately or publicly, as your conscience may press upon you. Besides, in the primitive Church it was customary for every one to make confession of their sins directly upon entering within the house of God. And although, continues the Minister, you ought at all times humbly to acknowledge your sins before God, by which words he means to remind *you* that whenever you fall into sin and the sense of your iniquity comes before you, then is it also your duty forthwith to confess to the party against whom you may have offended; or if it be against Heaven, and known only to thy

\* Visitation of the sick.—Absolution. † Psalm xxxii. 5

‡ Matt. vi. 6. § James v. 16. || John xx, 22, 23.

\*\* Matt. iii. 5, 6. Mark i. 5.



CREATOR, to Him go, and say, Father, I have sinned : yet ought you most chiefly so to do when you and others meet together for the purpose of presenting yourselves more immediately within the presence of the HOLY ONE, who has promised to be, by HIS SPIRIT, in the midst of, be it only, two or three who are gathered together in the name of Christ.\* Hence it is a good thing to go where GOD THE LORD of mercy may be found in the midst of the congregation to render thanks for the great benefits all have received at his hands; obeying the Apostle's order, "giving THANKS ALWAYS for all things;"† and being thus reminded of another duty, endeavour to recollect the many, the very many, blessings you have been partaker of in common with most others; so common, in truth, as to be little valued, or rather accounted unworthy of constant thanks; such as health, a cheerful open heart, vigour of mind and body, the general comforts of life, the blessing of your nativity in the kingdom of Christians, the favor of serving *your God* in peace, and the continuance and endurance of all things pertaining to your comfort and consolation, be they of whatever kind, in proportion to your age; and for these and all mercies to bless and magnify the holy name of the LORD gracious and merciful, and to set forth, by your christian example and conversation, His most worthy praise, in imitation of the Psalmist, by the earnest repetition of "*I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee:*"‡ because all comfort, every source of true consolation, all real blessings are from the Lord, and none can reach unto them

\* Matthew xviii. 20. —† Ephesians v. 20. ‡ Psalm xxii. 22.

and help themselves thereof: but especially because we deserve them not.

Again: the congregation has assembled for other purposes, viz, to hear the most holy word of God; a privilege and blessing denied to millions, and on that account the more to be valued; because in the Old and New Testaments are granted and made known to mankind the visible and invisible means of grace, viz, the directions by which mankind may please and serve their CREATOR, and the help he will afford all those who are willing to become his people, so that they may carry those means into effect. Give, then, the whole power of your mind: pay the utmost attention to the holy Scriptures, whether in the several portions or chapters appointed to be read, or in the Psalms, or in other parts of the service; many of which are taken from the Book of books, the BIBLE.

And again: forget not that the people are assembled together to ask those blessings which are requisite and necessary as well for the body as the soul; and by the hearing of the holy word, remember you are taught to ask so as to obtain those things which may be needful for the daily support of yourself and all those who are dear unto you; yet more especially does the Word of God instruct *you* in the way by which the things pertaining to the kingdom of the Father may be obtained, for which your immortal spirit is so mainly interested; leading you forward to such an exalted state of faith that, by duly seeking first those things which be of the kingdom of God, and consequently are for his glory, as is the salvation of your spirit, all other matters connected with the body are promised, and will most assuredly come, as the fulness, and divine, and perfect blessing of  
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your God, who crowneth all things with his goodness. Wherefore the Minister, in God's NAME, invites *you*, saying, "I pray and beseech you, (and what more can he say?) as many as are here present, to accompany me, with a pure heart and humble voice:" a most solemn invocation for *every one* forming the congregation to join with him in *solemn prayer*, and to perform those public duties which have been handed down from the earliest periods of the Christian Church. With a pure heart, viz, *the mind abstracted from worldly concerns*; together with a humble voice unto the THRONE OF THE HEAVENLY GRACE, the seat of mercy, and to say, viz, to *repeat what the Minister himself first audibly utters*. Enter, then, into the closet of thy mind: shut the door of the world: because when the confession of the congregation has commenced *thou* wilt be in the more immediate *presence of thy God, thy CREATOR, AND JUDGE ETERNAL*. Be still, therefore, and commune with thine heart, and *be not content with the repetition of others* in their union and consent with the Minister, but be sure to *repeat for thyself* most essentially on this account, every separate sentence as the Minister delivers each from his mouth, and that since *no one can confess for another, every one must confess for himself*, and you must of necessity for *yourself*. Be not then satisfied with the diction of the confession made by the Minister in the plural number, as if he and others could perform what identically belongs to yourself, but *turn your own thoughts upon your own follies, sins, and iniquities*; and each of the whole congregation so doing their own duty, all will be able to unite most fervently in beseeching the ALMIGHTY and most MERCIFUL FATHER, saying after the Minister, and *upon your knees*; for humility of mind can scarcely away unless it subjects the body to the same disposition.

## THE CONFESSION.\*

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AND now be full of thought concerning your own sins, of that sober inward reflection which ought always to precede prayer as the Minister introduces the form of the Confession by addressing the LORD GOD JEHOVAH as the FATHER ALMIGHTY and most MERCIFUL, saying, "we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep." At this moment call to mind the commandments of thy Maker; meditate upon those particular instances in which *you* may have erred during the last week, should it be that you frequent the house of prayer only upon the Sabbath, or since you last made your confession. Whether, as for instance, *you* have been walking after the common frailties of nature, being yourself youthful and not yet grown to maturity in thoughtfulness; or whether you have wandered more in omission of duties, that is, in neglect of those things which as a Christian you are privileged with and called upon to perform; and such neglect, remember, may be awfully and most responsibly great; and if it be so, how truly may *you* add, as one of those who have been led to disobey the rule of right, "we have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts." But should *your* sins be after

\* In the earlier periods of Christianity all persons regarded the confession of sins to be their first duty upon entering the Church for divine worship, and every one pronounced his own confession with due concern and sorrow.

premeditation, or such as you have dwelt upon in thought prior to the doing of them, and have been the cause of bringing others into iniquity, or by any means afflicting them, through your own immorality, by loss of character, property, or good name, then may *you* well say, and if you make true confession you will feel the need of repeating after the Minister's words, "we have offended against Thy holy laws: we have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done;" for it will be evident to yourself that *you* have not only paid too much regard and attention to worldly affairs, and under this bias have disregarded *YOUR GOD*: but more, for probably you have departed from the *FEAR OF GOD* and in various paths, therefore deserve his wrath and displeasure; hence you cannot fail to add, "there is no health in us;"—no cheerfulness, no impressions of consolation, no hope, but sensible that your souls are cast down, and thinking of your own state your spirits are disquieted within you.

In this condition whereunto would you, the fallen Christian, flee? To your friends? To the world? Will the Lord be pleased with *thousands of rams, or with ten thousand of rivers of oil?* "*Shall I give (saith the Prophet,) my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?*"\* There is no where to flee unto, save to thy *GOD AND SAVIOUR*, and on this account you look unto the *LORD GOD* of mercy through his Son *JESUS*, and continue, but thou, O *LORD*, have mercy upon us miserable sinners, adding the actual supplication for mercy, "Spare Thou them that are penitent:" in

\* Micah vi. 7.

which prayer, if with it there be no sound sorrow, no desire that *your* repentance should bring forth the fruit of a turning from your evil ways, there is, there must be, much of mockery, much of sin. Rather, however, with the earnest hope that true repentance is within the breast whenever there is a repetition of such confessions, let us reflect how heart-rending it is to think, and to be forced to own, that the depravity of mankind should be so great as to deprive them of God's holy assistance, and to cause them, one and all, to cry aloud for mercy lest they be consumed; and then how sincere should be the petition, "*Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach:—wherefore should they say among the people, where is their God?*"\* Yea, "*feed thy people with thy rod, the flock of thine heritage,*"† lest they perish. So when we say, "Spare thou them which confess their faults," this will be of a truth a true prayer, if you are convinced that you have lost the grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST through your negligence in not seeking the righteousness of the KINGDOM OF GOD; yet is it a prayer which cannot possibly reach the God of mercy except there has been true confession; for in the sentence "restore thou them that are penitent," no other thing is asked, so that if there *exist no penitential sorrow*, there can be no forgiveness.

And all these supplications are made and offered to GOD THE FATHER. Observe well: "according to thy promises," says the Minister, declared unto mankind in CHRIST JESU OUR LORD, in the following sentences, for instance, "*Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.*"‡ "*If any man sin, we have an advocate with the*

\* Joel ii. 17.

† Micah vii. 14.

‡ 1 Timothy i. 15.

*Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins."*\* *"I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine."*† *"I send the promise of my Father upon you."*‡ *"Him hath God exalted—to give repentance—and forgiveness of sins."*§ *"God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,—in whom we have the forgiveness of sins."*|| Which texts plainly announce that the promises have been fulfilled and are accomplished in CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD, as touching the remission of sins, for Jesus is the Lord of Christians.

Then, lastly, we send forth one other prayer to GOD the most merciful Father, that for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, as the SON OF GOD, the Founder of Christianity, and that sinless example with which he enlightened the world, we may all from henceforward live as Christians are bound to live, by the profession of faith; that their light may be seen by their works, and that they may be known thereby as the children and servants of the FATHER, to the glory of that holy name, GOD, the ETERNAL EVERLASTING ONE. And how can those who profess the faith of Christ live to the glory of God except they live a godly, righteous, and sober life? a life in which their minds are given in all good measure to prayer, to thanksgiving, to praise; accompanied with temperance in all things: conversation, temper, meat, and drink; yet earning their daily bread with diligence and care, not slothful in business, but serving the Lord in righteousness and true holiness; being honest amongst all men, and so full of faith, hope, and charity, that amidst all the chances and changes of their existence for

\* 1 John ii. 1, 2.      † John xvii. 9.      ‡ Luke xxiv. 49.

§ Acts v. 31.

|| Ephesians i. 4. 7.

that period of years allotted by God supreme over all, Christians may stand fast even unto death. Such the importance and spirit of the confession, and to which the *congregation* are required to say *Amen*, so be it;—*not only the clerk, but the whole congregation*, viz, every one, from the least to the greatest: a word, which when used by some, it is to be feared, is repeated as of habit and custom, and said also by others, alas! almost involuntarily after the clerk, who have not united with the more pious of the congregation in making any confession whatever. God grant that such thoughtlessness may never more be with any one who assembles in the House of Prayer and is present at the confession of the people; and if *you*, who are thus meditating over these things, have been so guilty, acknowledge *your* fault whenever you go there again, and pray in the mean time for God's grace to do better in time to come. Amen.

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### THE ABSOLUTION.\*

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AND this work of confession done, the Priest utters the following words, in which are contained the spirit of absolution, he alone rising from the attitude of prayer, the people still kneeling, speaking as one of that Priest—

\* It is highly worthy of notice that the title of this part of the Service is "The Absolution," the article *the* giving the title a peculiar force and significance not commonly understood nor received. Had it been for instance "An Absolution," or "The Form of Absolution,"



hood on earth whose peculiar office and duty it is to stand between the Most High and fallen man. First, then, the Priest addresses the ALMIGHTY GOD as the FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, and so does, because the LORD JESUS CHRIST being the Son of God, who, in his own person as man, yet verily and truly God, revealed through his sufferings and death for mankind, the exceeding loving-kindness and mercy of the Father of Heaven: the Son of God himself, by his endurance of pain and misery on account of the sins of others, (he being without sin, in thought, word, and deed,) giving himself up, the just for the unjust, became the LAMB OF GOD to take away the sin of the world.\* On this ac-

tion," the impression conveyed would have been that such absolution, as was to be pronounced, had its origin with the high authorities of the Church or the State, and might then have been regarded as a pronouncement or declaration of a certain form by the Priesthood, void of any power or authority of Divinity. Not in anywise, after such misconception, is The Absolution to be considered; for in fact, and under the truth of the Gospel, The Absolution contains and effects more, much, very much, more; the very passing away of sins with God's power through the name and merits of Jesus Christ, to all such as have consented and been quickened to the foregoing conditions of faith and repentance.

\* That Jesus Christ had the power to forgive sins even during his sojourn upon earth, as the Son of God, is clear from St. Mark, ii. 7, &c.,—There were certain of the Scribes reasoning in their hearts after this manner, "who can forgive sins but God only?" and Jesus *perceiving in his spirit* (truly this was alone the power of God,) that they so reasoned, he ordered "the sick of the palsy" to arise, take up his bed, and walk, which he did, thus leaving the Scribes to draw this conclusion, that as he was endued with power over the body, so was it possible that he had likewise power to heal the impurity of the soul that had sinned; for he had before said to the same person "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." Mark ii. 5.

count is it that the LORD GOD the CREATOR and JUDGE eternal can be addressed with the greatest surety and confidence, believing, as Christians do, that through the atonement made by the only begotten Son, JESUS, HE, the GREAT GOD and JUDGE of sinners, can be approached as the ONE BEING of beings, who desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from the evil of his ways, repent, and be saved; for the Lord willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he may turn from his wickedness and live, *"for I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God."*\* And because the ALMIGHTY FATHER hath given power, *"then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.—He breathed on them, and saith unto them, receive ye [the disciples] the Holy Ghost: whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them."*†—*"Remission of sins should be preached in his name."*‡—And commanded them to go, *"teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."*§—*"Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers."*||—*"Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ."*\*\*—*"Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament,"*†† to declare and pronounce Jesus, whom God exalted to give repentance and forgiveness of sins,‡‡—to his people.

The Minister having thus pronounced the reason for which he invokes Almighty God, viz, that the Almighty would not the death of a sinner, and also having made known that the Almighty hath given power and autho-

\* Ezekiel xviii. 32.      † John xx. 21—23.      ‡ Luke xxiv. 47.

§ Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.      || 1 Cor. iii. 5.      \*\* 1 Cor. iv. 1.

†† 11 Cor. iii. 6.      ‡‡ Acts v. 31.

urity to his ministers to grant absolution and remission of sins in the name of Christ to the people upon their repentance: the Priest, and none but Priests, have power and authority so to do, according to St. Peter, for, "*Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ,*"\* proceeds to say that the Almighty, the Minister, as it were, beholding in the ALMIGHTY FATHER, the SON AND LAMB OF GOD, as every Christian will believe that the FATHER and the SON are one; in such wise does the Priest declare, as the ambassador of peace from the Most High, that the only Omniscient and all merciful God, pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel.

Here then are two conditions upon which pardon and absolution of sins wholly depend; and be it well remembered that the services of the Minister, as one of the Priesthood, are but as wind which cometh and goeth whither no one knows, except the conditions on the part of the congregation are complied with; the first condition being true repentance, and the second unfeigned belief in the Gospel. And be it said here of repentance, that there may be, and too often is, what is denominated repentance although false, both in its principle and with regard to its effects; because it is either only temporary and not the fruit of faith, nor from conviction of sin. Repentance often appears as if one knocked at the door and no opening followed; or as if the door was partially opened and you entered not; the third is as one who knocks because there is a door, and for no other reason.

\* 1 Peter ii. 5.

But the second ground of absolution best unfolds the root of repentance, viz, unfeigned belief in the holy Gospel. How does this apply? That as the holy Gospels contain the words of God the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, for the purpose of setting forth by what means the salvation of mankind can be attained, and salvation the Gospels declare cannot be attained without true faith, belief in Him, JESUS CHRIST, whom the Gospels, in various places, instruct mankind to believe is the only person and name by which they can be saved; for be it known unto you all, that by the name of Jesus Christ—neither is their salvation in any other: for there is no other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved.\* And one of the evidences of this belief is repentance:—“*godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of.*”† So unless the faith of a Christian be full and powerful in Jesus Christ as the Saviour of mankind, and of sufficient worth and confidence as to bring and work upon the mind of the believer the blessing of faith in the fruit of true repentance, not to be repented of: yes, of such power and effect that the Christian shall have reason to rejoice and bless God because of its holy effects in the amendment of his life by good works; there can exist no repentance upon which to build a hope that we are pardoned or absolved from our sins.

And so let it be also borne in memory that to have the benefit of absolution, confession of sin is unconditionally required, with which there must exist sincere sorrow of the mind, most aptly called repentance; and with this true and earnest repentance, an amendment of life;

\* Acts iv. 10—12.

† II Corinthians vii. 10.

or, in other words, the power of the Holy Spirit must be in operation upon the soul, with which mankind is so very peculiarly and essentially gifted, and in such manner, as to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit unto holiness as the servants of God,\* in every one who seeks absolution. So likewise must the Holy Spirit be with the Minister in his official capacity as Priest. And thus with the Priest, so with the people, must there be one other fruit of the Spirit, viz, MECKNESS, for in this God giveth more grace, in that He "*resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.*"† and the fruit of the Spirit is meekness.‡ Thus again, without earnest belief in the power of the SPIRIT of GOD, the HOLY GHOST, which proceedeth from the FATHER and the SON, and in these three Persons, as one ETERNAL GODHEAD, there can be no pardon to *you* although you may profess to be a believer in Christ; for in this belief, and in this alone, is the power of the Gospel. These are therefore the two conditions for pardon and absolution, viz, sound belief in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the fruit of the Holy Spirit, repentance.

In this place also let two other points be set before you, viz, the one, that since the Priest is as much bound and called upon to confess for himself as others are for themselves, it is evident that the Priest cannot claim, and does not even presume, to have any power of absolution except it be as the immediate servant of God in the Priesthood; or, as it may be expressed, and in truth with greater emphasis, that it is the office itself, clothed or overshadowed with the Holy Ghost which is efficient for absolution. The other point is, viz, that it is not all

\* Romans vi. 22.    † James iv. 6.    ‡ Galatians v. 23.

present and forming the congregation who can be partakers of the holy influence of the power of absolution, except by the favour of God all are truly penitent; in plain fact, only such as may be blessed with the power of true repentance for their past sins and enjoy God's favor, thus far in their return to the sheep-fold.

Repentance therefore being the fruit of the Spirit of God, or God's own blessing upon the children of men, for God now "*commandeth all men every where to repent;*"\* and "*God is a Spirit;*"† and there is "*one Spirit;*"‡ and repentance proceeding not in any way or measure of ourselves, for although mankind are free agents to will in their agency, yet is their will and agency of God's pleasure, for God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will,§ and as St. Paul writes, "*God worketh in you both to will and to do;*"|| therefore we can do no other thing than ask repentance of Him, by whom we are created to good works.\*\* Hence, saith the Minister, let us **BESEECH** Him, **GOD** the **FATHER**, to grant his Holy Spirit, that those things may please him which we do at this present, and that the rest of our life hereafter may be pure and holy; by which prayer, the Minister, in full confidence of God's mercy, firmly relies that the holy and fruitful blessing will bud, blossom, and fructify in the works of conversion, repentance, and amendment; so that being renewed in the spirit of our minds as Christians, and thus truly created in Christ Jesus unto good works, we may walk as those born of water and the Spirit†† for the remainder of our mortal term: and when at the last, time being no more, and the day of judgment arrived, then, that we may come to his

\* Acts xvii. 30. † John iv. 24. ‡ Ephes. iv. 4. § Rev. xvii. 17.

|| Philipians ii. 13. \*\* Ephes. ii. 10. †† John iii. 5.

eternal joy, and behold the glory of the LORD GOD of Christians for evermore: and all the Priest has thus said, done, and petitioned for, has been, as he now adds, through JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD, in good hope that what JESUS CHRIST did say may be verified in us,—“*I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he may give it you.*”\* If again Christ said “*if ye shall ask any thing in my name I will do it.*”†—“*How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?*”‡

How great, wonderful, and manifest then is the mercy of GOD THE FATHER, who sent his only begotten Son, JESUS CHRIST, into the world to be the propitiation for the sins of the world; and herewith is the consolation that *you*, if your faith be such as has been spoken of, can say, I do verily believe the offering of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ to be the propitiation for my sins. Ask therefore in faith, nothing wavering:§—“*and this is the confidence that we have in him, [the SON OF GOD,] that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.*”||

Lastly, of The Absolution. Observe, that whilst it is no part of *your* duty to repeat any portion of the form of words in use by the Priest at the time of his pronouncing the absolution, yet is it left for *you and every one of the congregation* to say *Amen* at the conclusion, with the most sincere devotion, and with the utmost sincerity of your heart, join with the congregation, *and so say ye, Amen.*

\* John xv. 16.

† John xiv. 14.

‡ Luke xi. 13.

§ James i. 6.

|| 1 John v. 14, 15.

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

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THE Congregation, as one body, is next called upon to pray unto the FATHER of all, GOD the ETERNAL and EVERLASTING BEING and CREATOR, in the same manner as GOD the WORD, and MAN CHRIST JESUS, set forth upon being asked by one of his disciples for some precedent of prayer, saying, "*teach us to pray.*"\* And at this time of the service the Minister kneels with the people, the Minister repeating the words of the prayer with an audible voice, *all the congregation* joining with the Minister, both here and whenever it may be used in Divine service, saying, "*Our Father,*" thus calling upon that Holy Being who has promised to hear, that Merciful Being who will grant, that Being Omniscient, Omnipresent, the BEING of beings which inhabiteth eternity,† as children who believe and feel that their Father is ready to hear, and as one whom they love so well as to fear lest they should displease him in the least; and with the elevation of this impression from earth to heaven the people add, "*which art in heaven,*" and therefore the Father being the MOST MIGHTY LORD over all, God blessed for ever, Amen,‡ first and foremost did the most holy Son of the Father teach his disciples, and herewith instructed all who might from that time forward become Christians, to hallow, set apart, consecrate and make holy, the name of the Father, the Almighty God, in the words, "*hallowed*

\* Luke xi. 1.      † Psalm lvii. 15.      ‡ Romans ix. 5.



*be thy name,*" according to a similar command given by God aforetime to his servant Moses "*Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.*"\* Especially then, at this moment make sacred, O ye congregation, with all the powers of your reasonable souls, the self-same NAME most holy; adding, with all fervency of spirit, as the Son of God authorized you to do, "*thy kingdom come,*" which means, may the power of God's Holy Spirit so regulate and influence the minds of his people, or that Universal or Catholic Church, which worship him in faith and fear, that they be so humble and lowly minded as to receive the truths of the Gospel, perfecting holiness with peace and good-will, unity and love; for "*blessed are the poor in spirit : for theirs is the kingdom of heaven :*"† they being prepared, both in body and soul, to be partakers of that place prepared for the faithful : or, under another impression, that the influence of divine grace be so efficient as to cause the true Church of God to keep the commandments, and instruct others so to do to the glory of Him who created, because "*whosoever—shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven : but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*"‡ And following the foregoing divine supplicatory offerings are the words "*Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven,*"§ or in another version, "*as in heaven so in earth :*"|| which words express the most animated desire of the heart, that the preparation for the kingdom of heaven may be such as to carry throughout nations so perfect and ab-

\* Exodus xx. 7. † Matthew v. 3. ‡ Matthew v. 19.

§ Matthew vi. 10. || Luke xi. 2.

solute submission of the affections of those who profess to believe in the only true and wise God and Father of all, that the earthly vessels of their bodies may be made and become the tabernacles of the Holy Spirit of their Lord and Master.

Thus far the sentiments of this prayer of prayers are especially for the glory of the FATHER, which ever was, and ever shall be, that He may be all in all upon earth as He is all and all in his own everlasting kingdom : so be it *say ye* in the concise form of "*Amen*," as you make the repetitions with the Minister, because such an expression on your part, voluntarily uttered, must spring from some attention you have paid to the several sentences of the prayer itself, producing in your mind the conviction that the spirit of praying has actively accompanied your address to *your God*.

The next portion of this most comprehensive prayer is a petition for our own personal good, as it is for the whole body of Christians, "*Give us this day our daily bread;*" and offered as it is in this place, by the congregation, how truly suitable is it to all, rich and poor, in the common application given to it with regard to daily food; when too you reflect that "*the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God:*"\* and again, consider that the petition truly and more completely speaks of the Bread which cometh down from heaven, for Jesus said, "*I am the bread of life;*"† or in another view, if we have faith in Jesus, according to the full terms of the Gospel, seeking "*first the kingdom of God and his righteousness,*"‡ the peace of God, the

\* Hebrews vi. 7.

† John vi. 35.

‡ Matthew vi. 33.

holy direction upon every thought and desire of the mind in order that our works may be good, and so trust and believe in Him : when we so reflect, that by such a prayer all other things shall be added, scarcely is there any need to say or desire more for our bodily wants : therefore suffer not this petition, short as it is, to be uttered by you void of this sensibility of the rational soul ; viz, that GOD THE FATHER will grant the bread of this life, both for soul and body ; and with this fulness and contents of the words is the request connected with the former sentences ; and after this manner ; because the kingdom of God cannot reign upon earth only in relative proportion to the positive performance of his holy will, inasmuch as you are able to perform it upon earth, as it is done in heaven : and remember also that your daily existence, under the guidance of God's Spirit, cannot be supported unless there be granted spiritual food in addition to corporeal.

The purpose of the succeeding part of the prayer is to obtain forgiveness of our trespasses committed against the will, orders, and ordinances of the FATHER OF HEAVEN to whom it is sent forth. In this prayer, however, the SON OF GOD has not instructed Christians to ask for forgiveness according to the power, extent, and willingness of the Heavenly Father's mercy, which is so essentially His, and would through his expansive bounty forgive all men their trespasses ; but the Lord of Christians has told his people to seek forgiveness in proportion to the measure of the believer's pardoning mercy for others. What clean hearts should the congregation possess who offer such a petition.

This is the consequent reflection which forces itself af-

ter weighing the Lord's words, poised as they thus appear to be in the scales of truth between God and man; for if there be any preponderance of ill will, malice, envy, or revenge, within the bosom against our neighbour, on the one balance, the other will be drawn up so high as to be totally out of our reach; hence no clean blotting out of sin will take place at the hands of the Father of all mercy. Such is the practically refined precept of Christianity touching forgiveness. How pure! how exalted! *Cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter:*"\*—"let not the sun go down upon your wrath:"†—"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."‡

Christians verily believe that the LORD JESUS CHRIST as God comprehended most fully all things, consequently, whilst void of sin himself, yet did the Lord know the liability to sin to which mankind were subject;—"We wrestle not" writes the Apostle "*against flesh and blood,*" that is, not only and chiefly against these two powerful motives to sinful thoughts and actions, "*but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world:*"§ and if the Apostle describes the combat against iniquity in such strong terms, to what amount of temptations did the knowledge of the Lord God attain. Sympathizing therefore with the frailties of our nature, most compassionately does the LORD CHRIST bid men to pray, and say "*lead us not into temptation;*" upon the repetition of which remember that the trial of *your* faith is precious, so that if Christians are tempted and are conquerors, overcoming the temptation, and can say, blessed

\* Matthew xxiii. 26. † Ephesians iv. 26. ‡ Matthew v. 48.

§ Ephesians vi. 12.

be the Lord who hath not forsaken us, they glorify their Father which is in heaven. Upon this ground it is well to have imprinted on the mind of every Christian that "*there hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*"\* The way here alluded to is, the open path of prayer, free to all alike: the plain meaning of these texts being, that Christians are not to faint but to resist, and lay hold of the means proffered by the Lord God, viz, prayer; which must be prayer in truth and sincerity, with earnestness and perseverance; not barely the crying *Lord! Lord save us*. The holy words of Christ "*lead us not into temptations*" are therefore most salutary, and none can be better adapted to the time when spiritual darkness pervades the reason, or evil communications bring us within the vortex of temptation, a trial which, whenever it falls to your lot, is to test *your* belief, *your* faith, *your* trust in God Almighty. But the Lord, aware that you may give way and live and die in your iniquity, wills that you not only pray against the trial by temptation, but that you altogether shun, hate, and avoid whatever is of evil; and hence the force of the next petition.

"*Deliver us from evil.*" A deliverance which requires the especial GRACE of GOD; the positive power of the HOLY SPIRIT in operation, for the accomplishment of a work not of man, but of God; because whenever we are caught in the net of iniquity we are bound by fetters which no power on earth can remove—"what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"†—captive in the trammels

\* 1 Corinthians x. 13.

† Mark viii. 37.

of his greatest enemy. Behold then the lovingkindness of the MAN CHRIST JESUS for his brethren in the flesh, that he should contemplate the most efficacious and ready means of deliverance, leading Christians to Him who has power over the darkness of this world. And why is it that mankind grovel on in the obscure and shady walks of sin, and sink into the deepest pit-falls of iniquity, but that *they pray not with sincerity of heart* first to have power to withstand; or if sin overtake them so vehemently in the drift of its flood as to prevent the opportunity of such supplication, then, as soon as conscience speaks, is it that they neglect or set aside the warning, and go on still in their wickedness. In vain therefore will it be for *you* to ask in such manner as to obtain the Heavenly Father's holy assistance without a firm resolution to resist the devil in all the various machinations which are framed for his purposes in the world and in the flesh; and should your heart be set to do evil, or if it be only indulging in the thought of sin, thoroughly useless will it be for you to repeat after the Minister in this form of prayer for deliverance from evil; almost rather say, "*Cleanse thou me from secret faults:*"\*—"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me:"† for if your mind be framed of sin, your reasonable soul having already resisted the grace of God, and your body being by nature of sin, the body and soul being thus unsanctified, although you may cry aloud for help, you need repent of the evil of your thoughts, of the whole body of indwelling impurity, before *you* can cherish the least hope onwards in expectation of deliverance.

\* Psalm xix. 12.

† Psalm li. 10.

The last portion of the Lord's Prayer consists of what is termed the Doxology, or a form of words which announce that praise, glory, and honour belong to GOD THE FATHER, ever His as ever it shall be. This doxology you will do well to repeat with all lively animation, because praise, glory, and honour, *you*, as a Christian, are bound to render unto Him in all times and places, and where should *you* pour it forth more audibly, voluntarily, and sincerely, than at the hour of prayer, and in the appointed *House of God*. And it may not be out of order to remark, that whether you firmly believe in all the articles of the christian faith, or even although (God forbid it) you are sceptical of some points which you do not comprehend, partly because you ask not, and therefore cannot receive, or partly because of the darkness of your minds, yet if it be your pitiful condition to be either a nominal christian through your negligence of the pursuit of the fruits of your holy calling, or heedless in the performance of the several duties and ordinances of the religion of Christ, yet fail not at your peril to render unto "*God the things that are God's*;"\* for "*The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God.*"† Moreover, it must be presumed, from your presence as one of the congregation, that you are one of the visible Church of God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, therefore that *your* heart must be joyful in being allowed the occasion and opportunity of rendering unto your God true and laudable service; and more also, in being thus reminded of your constant duty, by adding to the divine prayer itself "*Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory:*" in which words you are only saying in more direct expres-

\* Mark xiii. 17.

† 1 Kings xviii. 39.

sions, the very same glorification which you have before expressed, viz, that there exists but one kingdom, one power, and one effulgence of glory; which is of the kingdom, of the power, and of the glory of God the FATHER—the CREATOR; which was his “*yesterday, and to day, and for ever.*”\*

Pour forth that prayer, reader, which your Lord and Saviour has graciously bequeathed to you as a divine legacy whenever you have an opportunity to pray in private, or whenever the observances of the Church to which you belong remind you when ye pray to say “*Our Father,*” &c.; and at what time soever ye so say, make the prayer thine own by means of the pious deliberation *you* cast upon each portion, as also by that perfect sentiment of soul which as becometh well the children of the Father to do: to which likewise unite “*Amen,*” which in its fullest sense expresses the following pious desire, may God the Father of his goodness grant what I have prayed for, and accept the praise and thanks due unto him which I have humbly offered, and this I trust he will do of his mercy towards me through Jesus Christ my Saviour. Hast *thou* prayed as the Lord Jesus Christ hath taught thee?

And now having prayed according to the words of your Lord and Master, regulate your mind for all due attention to the Minister’s words, and the responses which *you* on your own part and with each individual present are called upon to make. The first words of the Minister are, “*O Lord, open thou our lips:*” to these you reply, “*and our mouth shall show forth thy praise:*” words sacred in themselves as the words of the Psalmist,† and not less so as coming with the melody of fervent prayer

\* Hebrews xiii. 8.

† Psalm li. 15.



from Christians. Then follows, "*O God, make speed to save us;*" spoken again by the Minister, and the answer is, "*O Lord make haste to help us.*" It may be well asked here, to whom have the whole congregation addressed themselves? to the Lord God: and for what express purpose and intent? to have power to pray, to offer praise: yes, the special servant of the Most High beseeches the **HIGH AND MIGHTY ONE** that the congregation may be so animated with heavenly affection toward their **LORD, CREATOR, REDEEMER, and SANCTIFIER**, that He, as the **ONE ETERNAL** may enable them to open their lips for the glory of Him who is **EVERLASTING**; and under the belief that the grant will be, and the power, so efficient as shall cause the people to show forth the praise of their Lord. Then, as if the Minister was made the means of grace for the assembly of Christians, as if he had become sensible of the proneness of our nature to fall from the offering of prayer and praise, the very means of grace, to Him who sitteth on the right hand of God to make intercession, the Minister again says, "*O God, make speed to save us,*" lest, as it were, we fall into temptation and forget our bounden duty; to which you in the response, catching the vibration of the holy and fervent spirit of prayer, say, "*O Lord, make haste to help us:*" thereby meaning that the congregation stand in need of the help of the Lord, present and active, to carry into execution the will already begotten to do that which is acceptable in the sight of the Lord.

What has been, brother or sister in Christianity, the amount of piety in thy soul whilst these effusions of the thoughtful have been uttered? Hast thou been with them?—one of the body in unity with the Spirit of

Christ?—one of the flock who bleat and are heard? Surely it has been even so: yet, alas! if not, hast thou been altogether heedless or worldly minded to such a degree as to have heard the Minister and yet felt not the desire, the spirit, of prayer, neither made any response? Judge thyself, lest thou be judged; condemn thyself, lest thou be condemned, as one who offereth the sacrifice of fools—as one who mocketh the Almighty. Ask for the spirit of prayer. Say, Lord God, teach me to pray, through Jesus Christ.

Advanced thus far in the spirit of prayer, upon the confidence that the absolution of sins, by means of the ministerial office, through the power of the GREAT HIGH PRIEST, has been certified by the Divine blessing to those of the congregation who have truly repented of their sins, the people so assembled having also offered up their anxious solicitations for power to praise and adore the Majesty of Heaven, the whole lift themselves up before the Lord, both in body and soul, arising from their seats, thus elevating the whole frame, to express from their lips that which in truth must be the earnest desire of all Christians who possess a clear understanding, viz, to call into exercise the duty of giving glory to the whole Trinity in their several Persons: to the FATHER, to the SON, and to the HOLY GHOST: and this is done, observe it well, because the Divine revelation of the light and truth of the GODHEAD has not only unfolded to mankind that there is but one GOD AND SAVIOUR, the Lord God Almighty, Eternal, Everlasting:—“*I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no saviour;*”\* but that Christ ever was and is that Saviour; for there are not two Saviours,

\* Isaiah xliii, 11.

but one, and CHRIST being GOD, He is that one self-same Saviour, in the words of the Apostle, this is "*Christ, the Saviour of the world.*"\* Hence are all those who believe in the Gospel compelled to acknowledge the FATHER and the SON as the one eternal SAVIOUR in the GODHEAD. So likewise because we are indebted to the power of the HOLY GHOST for this information in the record of the Holy Scriptures, for "*all scripture is given by inspiration of God;*"† and because the HOLY GHOST is GOD—"The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee;"‡ drawing the fairest and most open conclusions from such premises as the above, and many more might be quoted.§ What duty is there more urgent upon those professing Christianity, and particularly so when assembled together, than to render praise whereunto praise is due: and to whom is it most due? to the GOD AND FATHER OF ALL, to the IMMACULATE SON AND REDEEMER, to the INSPIRER OF ALL GOOD.

Make speed therefore, O ye people, to open your lips and glorify the three Persons of the Trinity, by saying, within your own hearts, as the Minister pronounces, "*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost:*" to which, with a cheerful voice, acknowledge that "*as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, world without end,*" openly and vividly; for if thou art a believer, it must ever have existed, even before time was—it is now—there where the spirits of departed mortals go; and when time is no more it shall be; or whatever is termed eternity is not comprehended, for eternity hath

\* John iv. 42.      \* 11 Timothy iii. 16.      † Luke i. 35.

‡ Which will appear in the quotations of Scripture to prove the truth as it is in the Litany.

no beginning and no end. Hast thou performed thy duty?

Thus is concluded the penitential portions of the commencement of both the Morning and Evening Service, and the Minister following up his duty saith, "*Praise ye the Lord,*" to which the congregation reply, "*The Lord's name be praised.*" These responses or versicles are most enlivening outpourings of the rational soul when uttered with the full animation and sensibility of the spiritual affections. The first portion indeed is the English of the word Hallelujah; a word used by St. John in the Revelations, "*Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God; for true and righteous are his judgments:—and again they said, Alleluia.*"\* Let these words which St. John heard "*as of a great voice in heaven,*" the chorus of angels, be therefore your precedent for the same heavenly disposition of *your* soul; and be not slothful in the work as if it were of no consequence whether uttered by *you* or not, and so left for the repetition of the clerk alone; rather join so fervently with him and others that *your voices* may be so heard on earth as is in heaven the holy Alleluia, the very spirit of that life which is of the Lord.

Canst *thou* praise the Lord too much or too frequently? The clerk cannot perform for *you* what is intrinsically *your own office*.

Confining these comments to the spirit of the Prayers of the Church of England and Ireland, whatever may take place hereafter, for the present the Psalms, the Te Deum Laudamus, the Canticle, Benedicite, the Benedictus, the Magnificat, Nunc Dimittis, Deus Misereatur,

\* Revelations xix. 1—3.

and the Apostle's Creed are passed over, calling to your remembrance that the Minister having heard the repetition of the Apostle's Creed by the congregation, viz, from the mouths of every one of the congregation, (*hast thou repeated it ?*) and also having witnessed their accordance with its contents by their standing up together with himself during the repetition thereof, the Minister proceeds to say, meekly, as if sensible of the *holy presence of Divinity*, "*The Lord be with thee,*" most pertinently meaning, may Christ, by his Holy Spirit, which he promised when two or three are gathered together in his name, be with you, and by his influence may your spirits be governed and awed by the Holy Spirit: a wish, earnest desire, or benediction, so replete with all humility and heavenly breathing that, spoken as it is by the Minister of God in his official capacity, doubtless with inward sincerity, cannot fail to convince every true believer in Christ of the influence of prayer, and to bring to the recollection of all that passage of David, "*Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart.*"\* So may you feel that the power of the Lord is present.

To this most momentous sentence uttered by the Minister, every one of the congregation should respond with some degree of modest quickness, and seeking what is their's to speak, "*and with thy Spirit:*" a meek yet most significant sentence, containing the most ardent request to the Almighty Father that the holy blessing of His Son, the only Mediator and Intercessor, may descend, and aid, and sanctify the performance of those duties which so essentially belong to the Minister, and which he, with the *blessing of the Godhead*, has undertaken to perform;

\* Psalm iv. 4.

and in this light the words "*and with thy spirit*" become an enlivening Christian salutation on the part of the congregation; as if every one present did utter, from the sincerity of their hearts, may God Almighty bless and aid thee in thine office as the servant of the Most High, to offer up prayers and supplications for the people.

And with the perfect and quickening Spirit of the Lord, in unison with that of the Minister, he adds, as if it were the consequence of the prayer offered by the people, "*Let us pray.*" An invitation in itself so solemn, so inviting in that place where the Spirit of the Lord is to be found; so consistent with the feelings of the humble penitent; so full of divine research, for it saith, in words so plain, that he that runs may read it, be still in your inward chamber, "*Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the Lord.*—*Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.*"\* And is it possible that a believer who hears the invitation to pray can turn a deaf ear to it? Moreover the notice, for so the words may be received, bids all who pray to discharge as much as may be all worldly thoughts, and to collect the powers of the mind for one great and abstract object and duty—prayer.

And now kneeling, to show your humility.

But *you* cannot pray immediately, directly, void of the moment's contemplation to cleanse and turn the current of thought from things unrighteous. Sin has taken so great hold of us, that of ourselves we can do no good thing whatever. Every one who would pray must be assisted with the spirit of prayer. Forget not that. Christians are taught to pray. This assistance is of a

\* Psalm iv. 5, 6.

divine character: and without it, what we would, that we do not; and so it is, often would we pray and do not; and what is positive deception to ourselves, *we imagine* prayer is gone forth from our mouths when it has not even been conceived in the heart. Alas! "*there is none righteous, no, not one.*"\* Hence, before you go to your Father which is in heaven, it becomes you to entreat the Lord for mercy, against whom you have greatly erred in having chosen the service of the mammon of unrighteousness in preference to the riches of godliness, and fearful lest you draw near to the footstool of that divine Throne with boldness and presumption, and honour not the Sovereign of heaven and earth, so much as you would an earthly sovereign, and lest also you should go to the Father not keeping in mind the propitiation made by his incarnate yet sinless son, therefore the Minister reminds you, by the use of the name of LORD, His most efficient office as the only MEDIATOR in heaven between *yourself and your God*, the Creator and Father of all, by saying, "*Lord, have mercy upon us;*" to which you answer, and although nearly in the same words, yet mentally, CHRIST, viz, JESUS, SAVIOUR, INTERCESSOR, MEDIATOR; aiding the purity and warmth of the prayer of the Minister by increased energy and freshness of *your* duty, and as if you were sensible of the MEDIATOR being at the right hand of GOD THE FATHER, there presenting the petitions of all who truly and devoutly pray.

And again, does the Minister repeat his former words, "*Lord, have mercy upon us;*" and although this is clearly a repetition, it cannot be a vain repetition, because it is a direct prayer to the Lord, a request to enjoy and be

\* Romans iii. 10.

blessed with the benefit of one of his perfect attributes to his honour and glory; for the greater the number saved by means of his mercy, so much the more honour and glory to the Saviour: and there is a precedent, a holy and mighty one, to be found in that passage of Christ's agony in the garden:—"and he [Jesus] *prayed the third time, saying the same words:*"\* therefore there is good authority for such a repetition. Besides, can we too frequently and too zealously ask for mercy of the Lord? What! should we not watch and pray one hour? May the Lord have mercy upon you. Nor is it right to omit the observation, that by the repetition of the prayer for mercy thrice in so short a space of time, with the interchange of *Lord* and *Christ*, that more is hereby conceived than expressed; for Christians can never obliterate the impression of the holy Trinity in all their addresses to that region of mercy from whence alone it can spring. When, therefore, in the first instance the holy appellation of Lord is mentioned, is not the Trinitarian reminded of the *Lord* the *Creator*? and in the third invocation does not the Third Person of the Trinity, the *Lord* the *Sanctifier*, immediately present himself? and thus with Christ in the second sentence the whole of the Trinity, in each of their separate Persons, quicken the recollection with the thought of HIM, the FATHER, the SON, and the HOLY GHOST.

Next in the course of the Service follows the Lord's Prayer. In the prescribed order of the Service the congregation is now called upon to repeat aloud the *Lord's Prayer*; upon which, because the spirit, power, and meaning have been already brought into observation,

\* Matthew xxvi. 44.



not very much more will be added. In this place, however, let an answer be recorded to the questions often asked, why is the Lord's Prayer so frequently repeated? and why repeated at all? To the first question it can be replied, because, it is that form of words declared from the mouth of our holy Saviour, and twice recorded by the Evangelists, viz, by St. Matthew as part of Christ's Sermon upon the Mount and again by St. Luke,\* most probably one year or more after the time stated by St. Matthew.† Both St. Matthew and St. Luke were hearers of it, and each were, without doubt, so deeply struck with its importance, and perfection, and sanctity, as a precedent of prayer for the use of the disciples, that each have left it in the narrative of Christ's life and transactions. Is the repetition of this prayer by its holy Author no authority for the constant use of it by Christians? Does not the repetition of it by Christ afford the strongest reason for his followers to repeat it twice if not thrice?

The answer to the second question, Why repeat it at all? is based upon the authority of St. Paul, that since Christians are ordered to pray without ceasing,‡ is it probable, is it possible, that Christians, after having been taught by their Lord and Master how to pray, can offer to Him, to whom all prayer is made, a form of words more acceptable than his own, either as their sole prayer or in addition to any other? So likewise can there be any address to the throne of God the FATHER breathing more of adoption and grace, offering more of mental praise, more of the exaltation of mind, more also to God's

\* Luke xi. 2—4. † Vide the age of our Lord as given in the margin of most Bibles. ‡ 1 Thessalonians v. 17.

honour ; bespeaking at the same instant the deepest humility :—more divine in its tone and supplication ; better framed to express the wants, the direct and absolute necessities, of body and soul, and so more for our own benefit :—calling aloud for the evidences of true and strong faith, for protection from the enemy of souls ; and with the Doxology more likely to rouse those who would praise the Lord of all, even GOD the FATHER ?

Observe again, that whilst Christians are told not to make use of vain repetitions, yet, if we are to continue instant in prayer\* is there not more of honour given to the Father in the presentation of our petitions to Him in the very same words of the *Father's only Son* than in any composition of our own—any compilation of a set form of words by men, however devout, however high in the Church of Christ ?—If I be a FATHER where is MINE HONOUR.† So that provided such arguments are true and rational, *you* cannot hesitate to repeat the Lord's Prayer again and again, and when in the midst of the congregation *be not ashamed to repeat it* in an audible yet very humble tone of voice ; not indeed for the express purpose of being heard of men, but that there be an union, a chorus of voice and language : for as of old there was but one language, and the cause of many tongues was the presumption of mankind ; so by this prayer the LORD it may be said has given one set of words to bring the petitions of mankind into one course of harmonic prayer, in which all hearts may join. Say the Lord's Prayer then as a child would, when kneeling to pray before the parent of earth, say it audibly, yet with becoming modesty, that it may be heard, in order

\* Romans xii. 12.

† Malachi i. 6.

too that the younger Christians may learn : say it that *you* may be certain *you* have repeated it ; repeat it that it may be heard in heaven, making it *your own* by the spirit of prayer.

Lastly. By our Lord's repetition of his own prayer in using of the same words under the same form : is not this a strong precedent for a set form of prayer both for private and public service ? Can Christians do but right in following the example of *their Lord and Master, and Saviour, in all things ?*

Then the Minister, standing up, ascending, as it were, from the earth, both in body and soul, to Him who is above all, and because he is in the Priestly office and at this moment standing between the *Eternal Shepherd* and the people, who would save their souls alive, for the dead cannot seek for mercy, saith, for himself and the whole congregation, "*O Lord, shew thy mercy upon us.*" And well is it said by him as the foremost desire of his heart for the preservation of the whole flock of Christ, and in particular for that little flock delivered into his charge : especially so when it is remembered that all present are sinners in the sight of the Lord ; and although absolution has been pronounced for the benefit of the penitent and those who truly believe the Gospel, yet, as it may be that not every one has been partaker of the benediction through impenitence and incredulity, and also because all are fettered and bound by iniquity, therefore every one requires the *mercy of the Lord* to flow constantly over and around the inner and outer man during the whole of that existence which is spared to mortals : thus the sentence "*O Lord show thy mercy upon us*" carries with it this force, *O Creator, show thy mercy by*

sparing us to breathe the breath of life, in order that being alive to the knowledge that our existence is of thee, our spirits may send forth expressions of thy love and kindness to mortals, who deserve nothing but thy wrath and displeasure: show it, *O Lord Christ*, in affording to us the comprehension of thy salvation: show that we truly believing on Thee may enjoy the means of grace: to which the congregation respond, "*And grant us thy salvation.*" This is a response which if spoken from the sensibility of the mind, arising from a perfect understanding of what you and all require, *the salvation of the Lord God* as a grant or free gift on the part of *your God*, in order that eternal safety may be the happy lot of all those who ask it: and in the more immediate application of the prayer for salvation, that it may be *your's*, that you and those of the congregation *who pray for it* may be now and for ever partakers of it; a response is it which if spoken from the conviction that no one can ransom his own soul, cannot be uttered, and uttered it must be with animation, or so deeply condensed in thought as to occupy your whole attention, which bespeaks sincerity; a response is it if truly estimated and duly weighed, which exceeds all denomination of worth or value. What, for instance, does it not contain? what does it request? the salvation, the preservation, of the spirit breathed into man, viz, his reasonable power or faculty upheld and blessed by the holy Spirit of his Creator. Yet the petition requests that the reasonable soul may so reign over the thoughts and actions of man by the law divine as to make the body fitted for the residence of God's Holy Spirit, and thereby a temple dedicated to his own service. Yes: *you*, as an individual Christian, ask for the

keeping of *your soul and body in righteousness, holiness, and peace, in preparation for and in token of your being one of those for whom Christ died*; hence make not this sentence a light matter when you use the words : say them, not because they are printed in your prayer-book, and as the simple formulary of the service, and therefore to be repeated, but let the words, "*grant us thy salvation,*" be your spirit's solemn and most solicitous petition to the *Great Spirit of spirits* that his salvation may be granted to encompass you now and for ever.

Next in place the Minister reads a verse containing a petition for one who bears the sceptre of the realm of those kingdoms, the people of which constituted the Church visible, for whom these prayers were framed ; and herewith the congregation proceed to pray that the same *holy and almighty salvation* may overcast and entwine itself about our *Sovereign the Queen* as the LORD of lords and KING of king's *deputed servant and ruler* over that portion of the Lord's Church as is established in these realms. Will you not therefore say with the true warmth of fidelity and piety, "*O Lord, save the Queen ?*" For remember it is not a trifling matter whether or not the Sovereign of these realms be under the protection and direct superintendance of the ALMIGHTY POTENTATE, KING of kings ; and for this plain reason, because much of the power and of the degree of freedom with which subjects may worship God, rests, as far as human means are permitted, with the ruling Sovereign. Nor should you ever overlook that the peace of the people, their morality, and their walk in external forms of godliness, with the aid of God's guidance, afford no small part of their ability to search after God where he may be found. And

be it always remembered that peace and quietness, morality and the outward characteristics of piety, that these preliminaries of true religion, as one prerogative and grant, are so far under the direction of the rule and example of the sovereign power on earth, that a large proportion of the maintainance of religious principles depend on, or rather is kept alive under the Divine blessing, by the personal patronage afforded by the supreme Majesty of these kingdoms to the Established Church ; since, if the Established Church were to be abolished, there could be no dissent ; and in this case, there being no one body as the head, each separate division of the several denominations of Christians would become as persons at discord one with the other. Neither can any sovereign, be it likewise remembered, do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with the God of heaven and earth, and be the disciple of Christ, and light to the people, which those professing christianity look to and observe, except the EVER-LASTING KING be the *saving power* of whatever be of the principalities and powers on earth : therefore *pray* for her *Majesty our most excellent Queen*, with earnest devotion, that she may be always under the direction of the MOST HIGH, and walking in his faith and fear may shine in the divine path of truth and holiness to the glory of God by her christian example : *Amen*.

“*Mercifully hear us when we call upon thee*” next say the congregation. And so must all mankind cry aloud to be heard of God through his mercy whenever the spirits of men incline towards that ETERNAL SPIRIT which is over all the nations of the earth, relying upon that divine Spirit of mercy for a hearing. But the *God of Christians* is not like unto a man : He hath no ears : why then do

Christians say "*hear us ?*" Because we speak after the manner of men. Christians believe that their "*God is a spirit :*"\*—"I am merciful, saith the Lord :"<sup>†</sup> from the Lord therefore there is, from these texts, mercy to be expected ; and the people of the earth ask for that mercy, sensible of their sinful condition, and with knowledge and belief that it can effect what none other power either of heaven or earth can effect. So, under this head, what you petition for is, that the *Spirit of mercy* may overshadow and bless *your spirit* with the assurance of peace, pardon, the blotting out of sin ; that trouble, affliction, and all the trials of life by pain, misery, sickness, distress, and want will be shortened, and that *your spirit* being fully convinced of the Lord's mercy toward you, and that reaction may take place towards others by your pursuing in your life what you have been assured of by the holy blessing of the Spirit of mercy in *your God* : for "*the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities : for we know not [writes the Apostle] what we should pray for as we ought : but the Spirit itself [which is the Holy Spirit, the Holy Ghost—God—your God,] maketh intercession for us.*"<sup>‡</sup> First then observe that it is *your's*—your own separate portion of duty, indeed you must make it *your business*, in this part of the service, to call upon the Lord as the Spirit of mercy, viz, *you must pray devoutly*, or, mark it well, there is no petition presented ; and afterwards, patiently abiding the adoption of the Spirit, wait in earnest expectation. And have *you*, as a member of the congregation, so prayed ? or are you now only awakened by this inquiry as one roused from the dream of forgetfulness and fallacy—as one born to a new sensation,

\* John iv. 24.

† Jeremiah iii. 12.

‡ Romans viii. 26.

to that duty which you have imagined to have been fully executed, and yet left undone through the mis-application of your thoughts, and that space of life which you might have intended to be employed to that purpose? But as the sentence is past, and another on the Minister's lips, should *you* not have performed your duty in this instance, may *you* have both time and heart to petition for mercy in God's due and appointed hour.

*"Endue thy Ministers with righteousness."* The last supplication was for the whole congregation. This is for the Priesthood and those who labour in the Lord as Ministers and Servants. Who are these? those who *"do his pleasure."*\*—*"Ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man."*† What then does the verse contain? The request for righteousness to be bestowed on the agency of those men *who minister to you the Spirit.*‡ In this case the Minister of GOD the SAVIOUR, the GREAT HIGH PRIEST, the ETERNAL EVERLASTING SPIRIT, especially invoked:—that *"Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, — which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty :"*§ who hath said *"I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely."*|| Yes: in the office of their priesthood these reverend persons, abstractly in their spiritual career, beseech the SPIRIT—GOD, the PRIEST EVER, to grant the whole body of Ministers, be they far or near, that which is His righteousness, and His alone—that righteousness which is the kingdom of God:\*\*—that righteousness which is *"the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith :"*††

\* Psalm ciii. 21. † 1 Corinthians iii. 5. ‡ Galatians iii. 5.

§ Revelations i. 8. || Revelations xxi. 6. \*\* Romans xiv. 17.

†† Romans i. 17.



true faith, with its increase of faith, in the growth of that vigour and life of purity of desire, holiness of action, correctness of conversation, and rectitude in all dealings with mankind ; qualifications which are sure to make the tree of faith known and visible by its fruits ; for holiness is the request made. *Amen*. This *Amen* in your heart at least *be sure to say*, because since *you yourselves*, who are of the assembly, in order to meet *your God*, would seek to be created in righteousness and true holiness, you then must not be dull of hearing ; this is your prayer, viz, that your assent may go in unison with your shepherd, that by his power of example he may lead you, with God's blessing, into the right way. Let therefore thy fervent accordance of heart tune in harmony with the Minister's solemn invocation, neither be slow to reply,

*"And make thy chosen people joyful."*

This verse may comprehend many of the people, divided under various heads, and yet altogether but one flock under one great Shepherd. Thus we behold the *Ministers of God*, who do his service in the Catholic Church, scattered throughout the world ; others also who, in benighted regions and in those parts of the world where the *appointed Ministers of the Lord* are not to be found, do, of good will in the name of Christ, and for God's honour, their best to sow the seeds of Christianity, to water it, and pray God for the increase thereof. There are also those who, in the midst of every crooked and perverse generation, desire to adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things, and yet presume not to become teachers or spiritual pastors, but withal drink of the sincere milk of the word to their own spiritual nourishment. There exist also the Babes in Christ, who

desire the sincere milk of the word that they may grow thereby: for such are all those who would turn and repent: who, thoroughly fatigued and overcome by the sinful pleasures of the world, would retire to wait upon their God and serve him for the future. And there are those who, like the thief upon the cross, are yet ignorant of the saving mercy of the Lord, nevertheless will be inheritors of glory. All these are to be reckoned amongst the chosen people of God; and for these, and all whom God willeth, and are in themselves willing to receive and understand the light and liberty of the Gospel, *you*, together with the voice of the congregation, ask that the Author of all true gladness of heart will grant that they be made full of joy, viz, holding fast the profession of the christian faith without wavering; teaching those things which concern the LORD JESUS, mighty through God, bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; possessing trust in the Lord and in nothing else, having the hope of eternal life: or, in words common with mankind, joyful; being in frequent contemplation of God's goodness and mercy towards them, bearing a cheerful heart and countenance; often in mental praise and thanksgiving; receiving the trials of life with gladness of heart, as the dispensations of the Lord for correction; influenced with pleasure to bestow alms in God's name, being gifted with contentment, and the like, together with such a firm reliance upon God through Jesus Christ for all things, temporal and eternal, as cannot be shaken.

But suffer not the word "chosen" to be received by you as directly and positively applicable to *yourself*, except *you* possess all those proofs and evidences which

the Gospel has expressly declared accompany the behaviour, conversation, and lives of the chosen of the Lord; and therefore never forget that they *that are with the Lord, called and chosen*, are also *faithful*;\* and none else. Upon this text alone, therefore, *you* must be found with the Lord, on his side, a faithful soldier and servant, wearing his whole armour, and fighting against sin, the world, and the devil: the evidences of faithfulness are only to be found in the list of good works, consequent upon the being born again, which new birth is known by the conscience bearing an awful accusation against all evil desire, and a searching after truth for the amendment of life.

Nor think you that by your own means whatever *you of yourself* have become one of the chosen, "*for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*"†

Neither that some sudden movement, influence, or disposition of mind has plucked thee a brand out of the fire, except you have the evidences of *the faith of Christ Jesus your Lord* as *your light, your example, and pattern*. Neither must the same and similar evidences be to the well-pleasing of men, but inasmuch as may be in the perfection of every good work in obedience to the will of God, "*working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ.*"‡

And now, notwithstanding these necessary precautions and charges, when you say to the Lord "make thy chosen people joyful," *you* have the authority of holy Scripture for believing that these were from the foundation of the world the chosen people of God, that such exist now,

\* Revelations xvii. 14. † Philippians ii. 13.

‡ Hebrews xiii. 21.

scattered over its surface, and will be of that same blessed flock so long as the world shall continue.

In all charity therefore, not doubting but that you are favoured, by the grace of God, with the blessing of sound faith, receive the consolation of the Holy Ghost with all meekness, and the joyfulness you have prayed for will most assuredly be *your's* and others' according to the sincerity of that true devotion offered in the holy service of your God.

*"O Lord, save thy people."* A short prayer, in which the Minister, in true christian love, would that all should be saved, being yet fully alive to the conviction that no one, except he repent, can be saved; because "*many be called, but few chosen.*"\* It is a sentence indeed which does convey the impression that there is a people who serve the Lord, and for these especially the Minister would that the righteous garment of Christ should protect them from all evil; still, the Minister beholding, in his presence, the assembled people, and with the hope that they are so met together to gain the protection of the Lord now and ever, has in his thoughts that they are the people of the Lord, and so beseeches the Lord to save them. Yet, bear in mind, that the prayer is only for "*thy people,*" viz, *the Lord's people*: and now comes this touching question, who, of the visible congregation of Christians so congregated in the house of prayer, are of those *serving the Lord*? Only those who have *confessed their sins, prayed for repentance and amendment, hallowed the name of the Father*, giving him praise and thanksgiving, and with meekness of soul, humility of body, and devout application to the great work they gathered them-

\* Matthew xx. 16.

selves together to perform, have done their duty in the sight of God. Shall it be demanded, hast thou duly performed thy part? Are thy prayers accepted? Hast thou found favor in the sight of the Lord as one of his people? It remains, that if *thou* hast, work out thy salvation with fear and trembling.

Then with hope that yourself and all the congregation are of the chosen people, and millions upon millions in addition, although the whole should be few in comparison of the many born unto the sons of men, the response is "*Bless thine inheritance.*" What inheritance? Parental?—Worldly—earthly patrimony? Not so, say the chosen people; but as David said, so say they, "*The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance:*"\* who "*according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again* [Christians now say,] *unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead: to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away:*"† and as the Prophet Ezekiel saith, "*I am their inheritance*"‡ saith the Lord God. These, the inheritance alluded to, are of a spiritual and heavenly cast, one of God and not of man. Can the Lord's inheritance be otherwise than of those people whose minds are opened to, and maintained by, his lively faith and filial fear! Hence, bless thine inheritance, comprehends the increase of the Divine blessing upon the pious, that they may become daily richer in love towards their heavenly Father and Redeemer, and in the performance of their duty towards their neighbour, so that they be the Lord's people now and for ever.

A more enlarged sense is yet within compass of the Lord's blessing upon his inheritance: first it is the bless-

\* Psalm xvi. 5.      † 1 Peter i. 3, 4.      Ezekiel xlv. 28.

ing of the Lord God, therefore the blessing of blessings; and herein must be reckoned all the blessings both of a spiritual and temporal nature; hence cometh the blessing of the Holy Spirit in all knowledge of God relating to the Divinity of the Godhead, and of the most complete and enlarged understanding of God's will in the commandments decreed by him for the rule and guidance of his inheritance, and of the obligation of their doing every good work in order to please him, and in obedience to the more perfect working out of faith. Secondly, the blessing of God is life, and that for evermore; \*—“*it maketh rich,*”† and this in every sense; it is a blessing upon the offspring;‡ it is a blessing upon those who fear God for the benefit of others—“*and ye shall be a blessing.*”§ It is a general blessing over the earth:—I will “*open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it:*”||—“*all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee:*”\*\* and in the fulness of the blessing of thy God yet more,—the Lord “*is the wholesome defence of his anointed.*”†† And should you feel that sin reigns in *your* own body, yet desirous that you die not the death of a sinner, but rather be converted and live, how enlivening the thought that the blessing of God through JESUS CHRIST will restore health and vigor, and heal thy wounds,—“*because they called thee an Outcast — whom no man seeketh after.*”‡‡ Think therefore of these promises—of these good things when *thou* art within the house of prayer or in *thy* closet, saying “*Bless thine inheritance.*”

\* Psalm cxxxiii. 3.

† Proverbs x. 22.

‡ Isaiah xlv. 3.

§ Zechariah viii. 13.

|| Malachi iii. 10.

\*\* Deut. xxviii. 2.

†† Psalm xxviii. 9.

‡‡ Jeremiah xxx. 17.

The next versicle is "*Give peace in our time, O Lord.*" A prayer most worthy the mental observation of every one who has been enrolled as a Christian, whether such a one be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, or, alas! slothful in business in that most momentous of all concerns, the business of the salvation of the soul; for without the ALMIGHTY keeps in subjection all warlike and evil spirits, in vain will it be for man to expect peace in any form whatever. The sentence, however, particularly has reference to the two former versicles: the people—the inheritance of God; so that the petition ascends from the Minister's heart and lips for the protection of the Lord over the Lord's own household, the Universal Church, in that holy quiet rest which is of God and not of the world; that the people may have choice and time, freedom and liberty to serve Him all the days of their life. Converge, therefore, *your* thoughts in deep solemnity for this blessing, and then let them open as an unfolding sheet for all people, yea, all nations of the earth: yes, encircle the whole, all people—forget not the Heathen, the Jew, Turk, nor Infidel: those who sit in darkness and the very shadow of death: let all be enclosed within the winding-sheet of mercy: and so for peace at home in your neighbourhood, good will between one another, between those of your own tenets in religion, and all others, holding forth the hand of fellowship for their conversion among all the nations of the earth. This is the peace Christians must desire: the peace of God on earth as it is in heaven. So bless us, O Lord, that we may enjoy rest unto our souls. Thus think—after this manner *pray ye*, when the Minister says "*Give peace in our time, O Lord.*"

And now, most emphatically, *you answer aloud*, "*There is none other that fighteth for us but only thou, O God.*" How true are the words : for whether we have regard to the visible or invisible Church, our own selves as of ourselves, in the narrow circle, or all within the expansive vineyard of Christianity, and none so well comprehend the extensive scope of the sentence as those who have been nearest to the furnace of affliction and have been purified even seven times in the fire; meditate then upon what *you* utter, viz, that there is none other that can aid, protect, and succour *you*, in whatever be your trouble, persecution, affliction, or temptation, but *your God*. Why then seek the aid of others, except as means ordained for help? Why trust in man? Why place any confidence in your own works or self-sufficiency? And if you so do, remember you deny what you have said. Yet think not that the powers and principalities of this world, if rightly understood and accepted, are not means, even blessings of succour, props and pillars to support the whole fabric of Christianity entire, such as princes, fortresses, riches; most truly are they of such mould, but only means are they, stones wherewith to make the building perfect, that the Heathen may not rage and conquer, and that the poor may be blest by the hands of the opulent. Such the powers that are of God, defined and made visible through the comprehensive understanding or mind of man. Hence the Christian boasts that all things are of God through JESUS CHRIST, who, by his HOLY SPIRIT, teaches us not to scorn, but rather value, the ability, ingenuity, and skill of man, as manifestations of that mind which the great CREATOR has bestowed for special use, under holy direction, against the machina-



tions of the wicked, and for self defence; and whenever the victory of good over evil is proclaimed by the soft whispering of conscience, or by the sound of the trumpet, every one who acknowledges the LORD to be God over all, will ascribe the glory of such conquests to that Divine Being who fighteth for Christians.

The sentence which you thus use let it be for *yourself*, an open and candid acknowledgement that God is in all to will and to do of his own good and mighty strength *omnipotent*, for the believer to have faith: with strength sufficient to keep his commandments against those powers of darkness which assail the will—the mind—the soul of man. It is a confession that the LORD GOD JEHOVAH is that SPIRIT which alone worketh in the heart of man—that Spirit which is right, just, and holy, and maketh man strong in the Lord to fight the good fight of faith. The sentence proclaims that the battle is not with the strong, with princes of the earth, nor in the strength of the horse: it saith in words which cannot be mistaken, we are Christians, and trust in thee O LORD GOD most mighty, that thou wilt give us the means, resolution, firmness, and confidence to trample under foot thine enemies for thine own glory, be they amongst our household, city, or nation; and that, nationally, thou the Lord God will so unite us in one bond and link of union, that our battles—thine, O Lord God—our victories—thy conquests: are, and ever shall be, for the renown and increase of thy Church universal. Do you believe that such is the *omnipotence of God*? Do you truly think that *God* alone is mighty to save? Doubtless then you exercise your faith in such solemn thoughts.

Next in place we have an invocation from the Minis-

ter of the most solemn, direct, and urgent nature; a prayer that GOD ALMIGHTY (for almighty that Being must be who has power so to do,) may "*Make clean our hearts within us.*" Now we are taught that man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth evil things; and again, that from the heart proceed all manner of evil. What then does the Minister beseech the LORD for? To cleanse the heart from all evil. But the word, heart, is only used for the thoughts—the mind of man—the spiritual conception which the ALMIGHTY has framed in mankind to guide and direct them in his own holy ways. It is then, in fact, to renew a right spirit in man. This is the prayer, and none other. It is right and good, therefore, that the Minister should say, "*O God, make clean our hearts within us;*" conscious for himself and those before him that "*out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies;*"\* and that these are the things which defile a man; and now that the whole congregation are met to supplicate that they may be purified in thought, and so offer a more perfect offering of prayer: for the Minister is also conscious that unless the heart be clean from all such things, no oblation can be acceptable before the Lord. Think then, at this period, of that name—JESUS:—of the blood of JESUS CHRIST:—of that SPIRIT *which cleanseth from all sin.* Think how far short of that purity in which man was created—how far fallen from the *glory of God*, are all, the *Minister, yourself, and all around you*, to be necessitated, humbly, most humbly, to petition God the CREATOR, that he would restore in *you* all with which the LORD God impressed man, *his own*

\* Matthew xv. 19.

*image and likeness, and therewith those attributes of Divinity* which mankind lost and cast away for ever. Think again of that divine benignity which has bestowed the means of grace through the beams of his own light, by which all may ask and receive that cleansing, immaculate in itself and eternal. Are such *your thoughts*? Are you sensible that like the leopard *you* have spots and cannot remove them except the Lord be with thee? Or hast *thou* never thought of such an interpretation of this sentence? If so, awake *thou* that sleepest, arise and walk in that path of purer prayer which, through the cleansing of the MEDIATOR of Christians, leadeth unto heaven. Hoping, however, better things, may the *sanctifying SPIRIT of thy GOD ETERNAL* prepare thee to say, for thyself and others,

*"Take not thy Holy Spirit from us."* What does this remind the Christian of?—Remember *the cross* and HIM upon it, when the voice uttered "*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*"\* If the SAVIOUR of mankind so cried aloud, shall not the congregation say "*Take not thy Holy Spirit from us?*" How full and expressive is this petition of the wants of the Christian world. God forbid, may all cry aloud, that the *Almighty* should withdraw the divine health and light of *His* power. What! should it please *Him* so to do, all spiritual darkness must reign, and errors of faith would become manifest; and this spiritual darkness would sway in high places as well as low. O pray, therefore, *pray!* let it be earnest, *most earnest prayer*, for the peace—the light—the holy direction of the Christian kingdoms of the earth, that the SPIRIT of God be not withdrawn.

\* Matthew xxvii. 46.

Yet how often do Christians drive away that same divine influence which the congregation at this moment implore the Almighty not to take away. The Holy Spirit cannot preside over, or be an inspirer of, the body given up to the world—the flesh—the whole of sin. The temple of the body must be first fitted for the Spirit. The befitting must be desired, sought after, and the want of the divine Inspirer must be felt before the desire will spring forth *for God*, in preference to mammon. Under this view of the sentence, "*Take not thy Holy Spirit from us*," the supplication it contains assumes this sense, suffer us not (and apply it to *yourself*.) so greatly to offend against knowledge that thy divine displeasure, O LORD GOD, be not so hot against the sheep of thy pasture as to leave them utterly to themselves and to the deceitful dictates of fallen nature. And what, if *Thou* shouldst be so highly offended, O MOST GLORIOUS CREATOR! then are we no longer *thy* servants—*thy* children—*thine* household—*thy* flock—*thy* people: no longer known as *Thine*: but our faith is vain—our works of darkness: we sleep, not to rise again: we are dead, although alive;—dead unto *Thee*. Bestow therefore the *Holy Spirit* of thy divine light and presence, of direction and salvation, that we may behold *Thee* and magnify *thy name* in silent praise, in words of truth, in deeds of purity and holiness. And to the thoughtless who would glorify thee, who are desirous of dying the death of the righteous, so made by the washing of thy blood, O CHRIST JESUS, thou SON and LAMB OF GOD, add these to the few out of the many called; even grant this blessing of salvation unto *myself*, unworthy as I am; yes, grant by the same *Holy Spirit*, true repentance and amendment of *my life*: yea, O LORD,

take not thy Holy Spirit from *me*, from *us*, from all those who would seek thee, that thine of the angelic host may rejoice in thy presence unceasingly for the constant conversion of the spirits of those whose days are numbered, that the flock of *Jesus*, the eternal Shepherd of salvation, may at last become as the sand on the sea shore. *Amen.*

These short effusions of the Minister and the people having ceased, the Minister bends his knees in common with the people, and assumes the attitude of humility, in order, as it were, to cause his body to coincide with that humbleness of heart which so well becomes the Priest as also the people when they deem it their duty to open their hearts in prayer; and the Ritual of the Church of England and Ireland in this part of its forms, introduces several concise prayers, called Collects: concise, the better to attract attention to the immediate matter contained in each of the several prayers; concise also for this essential reason, that by the constant repetitions to *God the Father*, the very name of God, remembering therewith his holy attributes, viz, his Omnipotence, signified by the title Almighty; his Eternity, expressed by the words Everlasting or Eternal, or Immortal; his Omniscience, as knowing the secrets of all hearts; his Omnipresence, as being everywhere present: concise likewise because that *you* may often conclude your separate wants and necessities, and offer the same through the name and intercession of *JESUS CHRIST*, the only Mediator between God and the people whom he hath made. Besides, it is the great privilege of the Gospel dispensation to be empowered to address the *LORD GOD* as *OUR FATHER*, viz, the Father of Christians; for, "*because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son*

*into your hearts, crying Abba, Father :''\** and this privilege also arises, because, as the same Apostle writes, "*ye [viz, Christians,] have received the Spirit of adoption.*"†

But Christians possess and enjoy one other great advantage, powerful and full of mercy, viz, the promise and surety that Christians *shall obtain* what they ask in perfect belief through the influence of *Christ* as the *Son of God*; and therefore the more frequently they address the Father through the Son, the oftener they take advantage of the privilege of presenting themselves before the blessed Son of God, they, as of those who firmly rely upon him. "*If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it ;*"‡ and this we are bound to do, "*that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*"§ So that the very conciseness of the several Collects, concluding as they do, nearly all, by making mention of the name of *JESUS CHRIST*, cause all who repeat them to fulfil what the Lord has ordered his disciples to do; thus applying to every petition, in general terms, that holy NAME—that everlasting intercession—that ineffable mediatorial influence which His spotless offering, and consequent gift of the *HOLY SPIRIT*, has instituted and effected as the medium for the assured hearing of the Christian's requests at the throne of God. And these concise prayers are called Collects, being either after the model of holy Scripture, much in unison and almost in the same words with the Epistles and Gospels before which they are used; or, it may be, because they contain the expressions of pious men thrown into the form of prayers, for persons when collected together, and so rendered appropriate for their particular use; or,

\* Galatians iv. 6.

† Romans viii. 15.

‡ John xiv. 14.

§ John xiv. 13.

it may be, from the original use of the word : but it matters not, the Collects are prayers, and therefore seek you the *spirit* contained in them, not waiting for the criticism of names and the reason why they have such, like the Pharisees of old, following up and entering into things external ; rather let *your* inquiring be after things internal and spiritual.

Passing over in this place the Collect of the day, for it is designed, with God's permission, to enter upon these in connexion with the days and the time of year for which each Collect is appointed : the second Collect of the Morning Service, for peace, comes next under observation, and it commences with an address to the LORD God of the whole universe, yet being the address of Christians to God as *their* God : that God which they are privileged to worship and to know as the Trinity in Unity. This holy Being is to be by them always adored ; keeping in *your* mind the persons and offices of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, in the unity of God, *the only* God. And now reflect on the prayer for peace.

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### THE SECOND COLLECT, FOR PEACE.

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O God : herewith regarding the Being of beings as the fountain of all goodness : *Thou* who art the Author of peace, "*for he is our peace :\**"—"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you."† And since JESUS CHRIST is the *Son of God*, who has given and left this peace, as if

\* Ephesians ii. 14.      † John xiv. 27.

in the very codicil of *His* last will and testament, we, Christians, may well look to the *Father of our Lord* as the Author of peace—of all peace: that which causes temporary peace amongst mankind, and that which is of heaven—His own, the peace of God which passeth all understanding: and because this, *your God* hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people:\* and I “*will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.*”† So is God the lover of concord, in knowledge of whom standeth your eternal life: for “*whom he called, them he also justified.*”‡ “*The gift of God is eternal life,*”§ therefore, the gift of eternal life being the *gift of God*, and the power of calling his people as likewise their justification being *of God*, *He*, the ALMIGHTY, being Omniscient, must have the knowledge of every one who shall enter into eternity, or that state which is *God's* own, and of which *He* alone has the disposal.

But that no one may think that because *God* has called you as a Christian to the knowledge of himself, and to the state of salvation, consequently that you must be justified, and that being called you have no will of yourself, or your own, according to the dictates of which you may on the one way work out your salvation, and on the other fall from the state of grace; this portion of the prayer reminds *you* that seeking the *grace of God* *you* may serve him; or, throwing off His divine favor, and walking contrary to the Spirit, *you* may fall into sin after your own pleasure. Hence, the next sentence is

\* Leviticus xxvi. 12.

† 11 Corinthians vi. 18.

‡ Romans viii. 30.

§ Romans vi. 23.



"whose service is perfect freedom," certified from the holy Scripture thus, "*I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life.*"\*—"If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine."†—"Choose you this day whom ye will serve."‡—"Yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ: which is far better: nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you."§ These matters being thus vouched from holy Scripture, and the two points, the one of GOD'S POWER, to make choice of whom he will; and the other touching the *free will* of man, being proved; most correctly do we ask God to defend us, saying, defend us thy humble servants. And now the congregation place themselves, each one for himself, upon ground, the most sensible of every impression, and for this reason, that unless *every one who repeats the words "defend us thy humble servants"* is on his own part so humble in God's sight as to be accounted worthy of the grace of humility, the petition must come from feigned lips, and therefore cannot ascend: but more, the hypocrite is present, clothed in the vesture of presumption, and not the pious and sincere Christian; so that this prayer requires most serious meditation, because *God giveth grace only to the humble*, hence "*humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God:*"|| yes, humble *yourself* in mind and body when in the congregation; and in this position you may with boldness even apply to the LORD for his defence.

But under the hope that all are well and truly serving God their LORD with the purity and essence of devotion,

\* Deuteronomy xxx. 19. † John vii. 17. ‡ Joshua xxiv. 15.

§ Philipians i. 22—24. || 1 Peter v. 6.

*your* petition is for defence “in all assaults of your enemies.” This sentence comprehends much, and extends to the utmost verge of thought and to the detail of action with the mortal enemy. The Christian, it should be remembered, ever stands as one contending for God’s glory and renown in the cause of righteousness. The enemy of Christians is that power of spiritual darkness the devil and his angels—temptations of every kind which are ever present in thought and action to take Christians captive and lead them into the vale of misery ; what therefore you here desire is that you may be able to stand, to fight, and to conquer, under the mighty KING of kings ; so that you may not fear the power of any adversaries whether in the human frame or in those beguiling imaginations of the worldly mind by which every one is so frequently and effectually tempted and overcome ; and finally you seek this aid through the might, viz, the SPIRIT of the LORD,\* which is the Spirit of might, viz, of JESUS CHRIST our LORD, viz, the Lord of Christians.

Doubtless you have, after the words of the prayer, followed the Minister in thoughts similar to those here introduced : if you have not so interested yourself as to have repeated the same words, well weighing them as they were uttered : whether, however, you have been duly attentive, adequately pious for the occasion, or thinking, alas ! of matters truly offensive to your God ; now, at least, collect your thoughts, and with due observation say *Amen*.

Be ye mindful also that this prayer (the second Collect,) is for the morning service, and designed for earlier use than is common in the present day ; when, however,

\* Isaiah xi. 2.

in use, either in the closet, or in the early morning and within the gates of the sanctuary, think how it enters upon those thoughts and actions which the tidings and transactions of every hour (and far less space of time) may require very essentially to have present, that mighty protection without which *you* must fall, viz, those evils of designing men or women, personal insults, sudden passion, age, evils of every colour and feature; and as you know not how instantaneously and how frequently in the course of the day holy aid may be needful, bear the words as well as the importance of this prayer in your heart, that in the time of peril *you* may have it as one portion of your spiritual armour.

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### THE THIRD COLLECT FOR GRACE.

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THE third Collect is for grace—for the blessing of grace upon the Christian world—upon all who desire to walk before God in faith and fear: a prayer wherein we address the LORD GOD as our Heavenly Father; mindful also that he is GOD ALMIGHTY and EVERLASTING; and so necessary is the grace of God, that no one has power to do his duty towards his God, or stand upright in his sight, without it; *“for by grace are ye [Christians] saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.”\**

But what are *you* to comprehend *by the grace which is the gift of God*? First, it is the love and favor of God,

\* Ephesians ii. 8.

*"who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began"\*—and "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."*† Secondly, it is the free imputation of CHRIST's righteousness to us—*"where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."*‡ It is the HOLY SPIRIT working on the mind for its renovation—*my grace is sufficient for thee: my strength is made perfect in weakness.—I glory in my infirmities,* writes the Apostle, *that the power of Christ may rest upon me.* It is the state of reconciliation which God grants—*"we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."*§ It is the free blessing and bounty of CHRIST—*"ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."*|| It is the influence and power of the WORD of GOD, which is God's gift, *"testifying [says St. Peter,] that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand,"\*\* viz, the true doctrine of the Gospel.* It is the working of God upon the heart in all charity—*"Therefore as ye abound in every thing—and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also."*†† It is spiritual truth and edification—*"Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour."*‡‡ It is the sanction of the office of the Apostleship and Priesthood—*"I was made [says St. Paul,] a minister, ac-*

\* 11 Timothy i. 9. † John iii. 16. ‡ Romans v. 20.

§ Romans v. 1, 2. || 11 Corinthians viii. 9. \*\* 1 Peter v. 12.

†† 11 Corinthians viii. 7. ‡‡ Ephesians iv. 25.

cording to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power."\* It is the favor of God, especially upon the soul, to all beloved of God—Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the true and effectual working of the love and fear of God on the mind—"The testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, — by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world."† It is the power which enables mankind to bear up under all sufferings—*Inasmuch as* (the Apostle writes,) *both in my bonds and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel ye all are partakers of my grace*, viz, of the grace which had been bestowed on the Apostle, enabling the Church at Philippi to stand fast and suffer. It is eternal life and everlasting salvation—*wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ*. It is wisdom, past all comprehension—"She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory."‡ It is good fellowship with mankind: the love of our neighbour—"My brethren, [said Jacob,] whence be ye?" It is, in short, the POWER OF GOD in all Christian knowledge, through Christ, to every good work—"We, as workers together, [with Christ,] beseech you that ye receive not the grace of God in vain."

With this enlarged sense of *Grace* entering upon the day—entering upon the concerns of the world, amongst the evil as well as the good, and with the business of active life in thought and perspective, you, brother or sister, positively require *the grace of God* for the protection

\* Ephesians iii. 7. † 11 Corinthians i. 12. ‡ Proverbs iv. 9.

§ Genesis xxix. iv.

of body and mind lest *ye* fall. And doubtless, some of the congregation better able to judge of the absolute need of grace than others, from age, or on account of the perplexities, trials, and sufferings of life, will offer this prayer with true faith and devotion, especially should any disease or sickness, or the prospect of any danger, be present with them, or the liability to any kind of evil; for these things call upon mankind whether true believers or not, *to think upon their God*, who has brought them to the beginning of the day; although, alas! in health and prosperity they observe not the time nor the season for gratitude. But those who fear the Lord God will remember him as their Deliverer, for *"the righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles:"*\* and if *thou* hast not opened thine heart early in the morning, now, in the midst of the congregation, seek the Lord, for his mercy is great, in the preservation of *your* life and all belonging to you up to this moment: and if *you*, for one, are awakened to this sense of duty, will you not say, although in silence, *"defend us in the same with thy mighty power."* And who art *thou* with this knowledge of *God's grace*, with reason as your blessing—who art *thou* with whom has been health and safety during the night, that will refuse to be thankful, but appreciating the great value of the *grace of God*, will ask the same all-powerful direction for the continuance of the day: and if such be *your* estimation of things heavenly, you will say, most seriously, *defend me, defend us*, if there be a family or you are present with the congregation: and further will you say, aware of the frailty and weakness of humanity, *"grant O Lord, that this day we* [thy

\* Psalm xxxiv. 17.

Church, most humbly do we say it, thy servants, thy people,] *fall into no sin, neither run into any kind of danger,*" in full remembrance that the soldiers of Christ are bound to stand and not to faint, for the glory of God.

Yet more : forget not whilst in the world the ungodly "*bend their bow, and make ready their arrow within their quiver,*"\* and that "*sickness destroyeth at noon day,*"† therefore every one is called upon to thank the LORD GOD for his grace wherein he hath been permitted to stand, and to ask for the same Divine favor, for protection during the smallest portion of existence against all those common misfortunes and accidents (so named) which the Lord God hath permitted, in order that all mankind take heed unto their ways and sin not in thought, word, or deed ; and that moreover the household of faith place such confidence in their God and SAVIOUR that all their doings (believing and in hope that they are of that household,) may be ordered by the governance of God, without which, in truth, no one can do any good thing ; but blessed with it every one who believeth may be enabled to do always that is righteous in the sight of the mighty Deliverer, "*for the eyes of the Lord are in every place beholding.*"‡ And now, as bidden ever to do, you so seek this blessing of *grace* from the FATHER through JESUS CHRIST your Lord, as one of the Church of Christ, and with the grace of God upon you, forget not that significant word, *Amen*.

But have you sought the *grace of God* ? Is your conscience able to reply, yea, blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ? Then has the Divine power

\* Psalm xi. 2.    † Psalm xci. 6.    ‡ Proverbs xv. 3.

been with you, and you have the consolation of that promise which cannot be broken, "*I am with you.*"\*

Taking no notice in this place of the Litany, which will receive due attention as a separate service, the observations are pursued respecting the next prayer for the reigning power of these realms : a prayer of no small interest, because there "*is no power but of God : the powers that be are ordained of God :*"† hence the highest power of these realms, Her most gracious Majesty Victoria, as the Minister of God to thee and to the people at large under her rule for good ; and God being the author of all good, and having advanced, permitted, and ordained Her Majesty to rule, and Her Majesty being subject to the frailties of humanity in common with all others of mankind, Christians, with their knowledge, are bound to pray devoutly for her, that she may adorn the doctrine of Christianity in all things to God's honor and glory, to her own glory, and for the true benefit of all her people : upon such reasoning is the congregation invited to say

#### THE PRAYER FOR THE QUEEN'S MAJESTY.

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"*O Lord, our heavenly Father :*" contemplating therein that since the holy Father, the LORD of all, is in and of heaven, he must be High and mighty, so also KING of kings, and LORD of lords, for such is his name, most holy, "*KING of kings, and LORD of lords ;*"‡ and thus is he truly the Ruler of princes. This therefore is the address

\* Matthew xxviii. 20. † Romans xiii. 1. ‡ Revelations xix. 16



of the congregation to the throne of God in behalf of *your* Queen, made, remember, your own particular invocation to the Deity, inasmuch as, should it be even, alas! that your attention is not well fixed upon each and every portion of this or any other prayer, upon your duty—*your* most solemn and responsible duty of prayer; yet be mindful that in the least you can bestow your assent in the full and hearty co-operation of your mind by the repetition of the *Amen*, under any impression of your reason, if you, as one of the congregation, be not altogether a mocker of the MOST HIGH and MIGHTY ONE, and do acknowledge that the same KING of kings, and LORD of lords, does, from his throne, behold all the dwellers upon earth: herein, then, *you* acknowledge that the Almighty now beholds you, and so you either do or do not join in the petition, saying most heartily, we beseech thee, the LORD of Lords, *to behold*, that is to have in view with all his loving kindness, our *most gracious Sovereign Lady Queen Victoria*, and so replenish, completely keep and endow her with the *grace of the Holy Spirit*, that she may *have power* always *to incline* her heart, all the powers of her mind, to do *thy will and walk in thy ways*—the will and walk of God as one of the Holy Catholic Church, called and elect for certain high purposes of Church and State; and for plain yet substantial reasons, all who are willing to become subject to the powers *which be of God*, most cheerfully and willingly you add, *endue her* plentifully with heavenly gifts, condescension, good will, love, charity, and wisdom according to her station and power to rule, with all discretion and prudence; yet more, the true knowledge of the Gospel of salvation, that amidst all the acquirements, knowledge, and trials of her mighty

calling, she may exhibit the evidence of Divine favor, together with the possession and enjoyment of *health and wealth*, that Her Majesty may have power to support her authority and to do good, with long life for the benefit of her people under such Divine auspices: to which you add, that the same ALMIGHTY RULER *may strengthen her* with such wisdom from above as may form the guide of her temporal rule upon earth, that she may *vanquish and overcome* all her enemies, spiritual as well as bodily, and having thus become more than an earthly victor, *finally*, after this life, since all must pay the debt of nature and mingle with the dust, *each one of the congregation* prays, and be it *yours* to pray, that Her Majesty may *attain joy and felicity* (such as no one on earth knoweth) in heaven, there to reign, through Him, the way, the only way, the truth, and in whom is the life everlasting, JESUS CHRIST our LORD over all. Such has been the offering of the Minister. Have *you* joined with him? Whether you have or not, now say *Amen*, that you may add your wish for every blessing from the Ruler of heaven over the ruler of these realms. *Amen.*

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### THE PRAYER FOR THE ROYAL FAMILY.

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NEXT follows a prayer for the Royal Family, and be it well observed that, as Christians, the true Church will ever pray for all the Members of the Royal Family as of those who, in succession, may ascend the throne, and on that account that they may be endued with virtue and every good gift, or, as those set on high, to rule with

measured power often in the highest seat of state : hence let the congregation say, "*Almighty God, the fountain of all goodness*" yes, the very fountain of all true life, exhibited in the fear of the Lord,\* "*we humbly*" with reference to your humility of mind and as in the sight of the most high God to your vocation and calling, compared with those for whom you now petition, "*beseech thee*" the only fountain from whence springs the living waters of which whosoever drinketh shall never thirst except after thee the living God, we beseech thee "*to bless Adelaide the Queen Dowager, the Prince Albert, Albert Prince of Wales, and all the Royal Family. Endue them with thy Holy Spirit,*" viz, so let thy divine guidance be with them that they may be always sensible that thou the Almighty art the Lord their God, their heavenly Director ; yes, do the sentences, "bless and endue them with thy Holy Spirit" mean and carry with them this force, bestow Thy holy aid, wisdom, and influence upon their hearts, that they may become wise to direct others by their example ; have full confidence in thee their God and not in the counsels of men ; and that they rely on thee for health, wealth, and knowledge, especially for a clear understanding of that holy religion established by thy SON, O GOD the FATHER in the doctrine of a pure faith, and all other benefits, yea, blessings which flow from the fountain of wisdom, Thyself the author and finisher of their faith ; and the congregation themselves, awakened by their own experience of these divine gifts, further petition, and you on your part doubtless, with joy, will fervently add (because Christians are bound to pray one for another,) "*Enrich them*" viz, increase in them all the

\* Proverbs xiv. 27.

fruits of faith, make manifest their good works, thine, O God alone to bestow, "*with thy heavenly grace, prosper them with all happiness,*" all happiness not only of this world but of that specially of God, so that they beholding thee as the Author of all true felicity and peace, may regard thee the living God and JUDGE, yet SAVIOUR, as their shield and buckler, as their only hope; and thus prepared and fortified "*that thou wilt bring them to thine everlasting kingdom, through*" Him, the Prince of salvation, "*Jesus Christ*" their God and Lord and our's, as the Church and your's, as the hope of every Christian. Art thou a thoughtless being for the good of others? Hast thou heard and not prayed? There yet remains your power of assent, "*Amen.*"

And what petition comes next to notice? a prayer for the Clergy and people, a prayer for the whole body of Divines, and for the people who assemble themselves together and make up the several congregations committed to their charge: how needful therefore that every one who owns the name of Christ should acknowledge and account of himself as the member of some congregation, thus being under the charge of a Christian Shepherd, a duly authorized Minister of Christ, that all may receive the blessing which attends the prayers of the congregation of the faithful.

Most assuredly then it will be granted that those who have learned that there is one GOD, one MEDIATOR, one HOLY GHOST, need pray for all who minister to them of this divine knowledge, so wonderfully given by revelation, not of men but of heaven, and so much the more assiduously and piously pray for them, if the people do earnestly believe that withal there is only one wise God—

a SAVIOUR, yet that the holy influence of this one God is sent forth and is in operation as of each and from each of the Divine Persons of the Godhead. Yes, most truly, and from the inmost depths of their reasonable power, will all Christians beseech the Almighty Trinity and Unity for the blessing of blessings—the Lord's own, his most holy influence and direction upon the Ministers of that pure doctrine which God's own and only Son, Jesus Christ, both laid the foundation-stone of, and propagated, that they all, as one body in Christ, may rightly and duly administer in those things which are of God, and not of man.

Again also will the people of the Catholic Church most carefully and vigilantly offer constant prayers and supplications for the several orders and ranks in the Church as visibly established, because the holy guidance of the Most High God is most indubitably and particularly required in this our day, that the Ministers of Baptism and of the holy Sacrament, who minister not of their own ability and right, but from the line of due and correct descent from the Apostles themselves; it is for these you, and the Minister who utters the words of supplication, do pray, that they may shine like lights in the world, and adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things.

Now, therefore, seriously meditate on the words which the Minister sends forth, viz, "*Almighty and everlasting God, who alone workest great marvels:*" and be it kept in remembrance that the work of conversion from mental darkness of any description in which the knowledge of God is involved, as in the enlightening the reason of an infidel or heathen, or the turning of the sinner from

the error of his ways, with others, such as the works which work by faith, and the tree of faith itself, these are each of them to be accomplished and brought into maturity only by the Divine Power; to which must be added the maintainance of the Church Universal of Christ in the bonds of peace and in the unity of faith. Hence the truth of the words used in this prayer, "who alone workest great marvels," is verified in the Prophet's vivid language "*can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?* [if they are able to effect these changes] *then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.*"\*

Having called upon God Almighty everlasting, now is it that the Minister and congregation pray, send to Him the same ETERNAL BEING the petition, each in their separate calling, the Minister for the body of the Clergy, and in them for himself, and the congregation present for themselves, as one of the many congregations who assemble to adore the true and living God, saying, "*send down,*" as if it were the dew of heaven; and it is the dew of the Spirit which, as it cometh, is not visible, but in its effects is discerned in the morning of life by its virtue, in the noon day by its moral productions of righteousness and true holiness, and in the evening by peace and resignation to the Divine will; send these things—thine, O Father, it signifies and expresses, upon our Bishops, viz, those who by their sacred and high office are set over the Ministers of God's word and work, to consecrate and to keep the whole body under due discipline; and upon Curates, viz, all who have the care of souls; and, observe it well, upon all congregations committed

\* Jeremiah xiii. 23.

to their charge: upon all these of the Catholic Church do you and the Minister beg and entreat (let thy reasonable soul comprehend it,) "*the healthful spirit of thy grace*"—the favor divine—the Holy Ghost—the Holy Spirit—the power of God—the wisdom of God—the understanding of God's will; and that full comprehension and perfect knowledge which can alone rule over, well and truly, and direct with discretion and prudence, the Church of Christ: this is what you all desire: and that they, all of you, and others forming congregations, under the protection and instruction of Curates, may not depart from the true faith and live as those who know not God, you proceed to request *that it may please thee*, the God of all spirits, who alone, remember, can be worshiped in spirit and in truth, that he, your God, *may pour*, viz, send a constant supply, a flowing upon them all of *the continual dew of Thy blessing*, the gift of the Almighty Donor of all good, that the people may partake of the manna which cometh down from above and of the fountain of living waters. *Amen.*

Observe in this place, beloved, for the congregation are supposed, from the essence and dedication of this prayer, to be assembled together to perform their several duties as members of the Church of faith and love, and therefore that you, as one of the congregation, have earnestly, seriously, and mentally prayed for Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, and if there be any others who have the cure of souls, as there may be, those for instance who from good will and the love of God have undertaken that cure by giving the instruction of the Gospel, in its Christian principles, to the Heathen, in places where none of the Ministers of the Church of God are to be

found; with this full meaning and interpretation of the prayer, and the word *Curates*, then under such solemn contemplation, you have dedicated to your God an offering from your own heart, from your mind, from your reason has it flowed with that earnestness which is zeal without enthusiasm, yea, you have asked for the Spirit of the Lord upon yourselves and the whole congregation, as those met together for a holy, spiritual, and lively service, where even JESUS CHRIST, in Spirit as the COMFORTER, has promised to be. Next observe that to enjoy or have any benefit from such a petition for yourselves as a body of Christians, be it remembered also that you must truly believe in the person and the power of the Holy Ghost; for void of this belief there can be no dew from heaven—"Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? [asked St. Paul,] And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost."\* And since what has been may be, although God forbid such gross darkness should now be amongst Christians, yet, since the powers of darkness are great, so it may be; therefore "*examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves.*"† And now with these remarks let the reader say, grant this, Father of Mercies, the fulness of grace, the positive and active belief in thee the Holy Ghost—"The fulness of him that filleth all in all,"‡ the head over all to the church; for the honour of our Advocate—the Advocate of the church universal, JESUS CHRIST the Mediator between the same church, redeemed by his most perfect and sinless atonement, and the ALMIGHTY God the Creator the Father of all. Narrow not therefore your ideas within the circumference of your own frame

\* Acts xix. 2. † 11 Corinthians xiii. 5. ‡ Ephesians i. 23.



when you say our Advocate, and Mediator; or your household, or the congregation, or those chosen few whom *you* may think and deem worthy of the advocacy and mediatorial powers of the eternal Redeemer; but think of the Church whom God alone, as the discernor of spirits, knoweth; have an eye to the *Israel of God* which shall be his from all corners of the earth. *Amen, Amen*, say ye, mentally, and *Amen* aloud.

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#### A PRAYER OF ST. CHRYSOSTOM.

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THE concluding prayer of this the Morning Service is called the Prayer of St. Chrysostom, because it is well known he was the composer of it. That for the Clergy has been copied from the sacramentary service of St. Gregory. So also the Prayer for the Queen's Majesty. Indeed the service of the Church of England and Ireland is much indebted to our forefathers in the Christian Church for the foundation of our present Liturgy. But whilst these matters concerning the origin of our prayers interest some more than others, it is *your's* to learn for the occasion upon which your attention is to be fixed, that the prayer beginning with "*Almighty God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications unto thee,*" that in this prayer your own mind is particularly drawn to the fact that *you* take vigilant care over your own thoughts, in order that you do actively and fully address the LORD GOD of the Universal or Catholic Church, that God over all, which mankind profess to worship, but none can worship except they serve him

in spirit, in truth, and in fear, and under the image and likeness of Himself, which he has declared and made known to the children of Adam; and to all who so worship the **TRUE** GOD he will be their God and they shall be his people, for thus saith the Lord God "*I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the Lord: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart.*"\* And "*God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him:*"† "*For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.*"‡

In the above expanded and most glorious view of GOD **THE FATHER EVERLASTING**, addressing *yourself* to him in hope that you are one of those of whom the Lord hath promised to be *their God*—one of those in this nation of Christian knowledge who fear him and work righteousness—one who has a willing mind, and you have the great privilege of approaching his throne of glory and mercy in such a way as to be accepted; hence, resting upon this vantage ground, in the fullest confidence that the Lord has granted to you the knowledge of himself in such capacity by his Spirit as to enable you to say, as one of the congregation, "*Thou hast given us grace with one accord*"—one consent—the unity of mind in the Church of Christ, "*to make our common supplications,*" wants, infirmities, trials, known unto thee the GOD, the **LORD** who hath promised to hear; it is now for you to think of that which you require chiefly and foremost of all things, viz, *His Spirit* and the *knowledge of God* unto your own salvation, and for God's glory. And in this part of the prayer is advanced, the surety of the **ALMIGHTY FATHER**

\* Jeremiah xxiv. 7. † Acts x. 34, 35. ‡ II Corinthians viii. 12

lending his ear towards you, for say you *Thou dost promise*, Thou who art the God of mercy, and hast accepted the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world for the sins of the world—Thou dost promise that when two or three are gathered together in thy name thou wilt grant their requests: be ye therefore not faithless but believing and it shall be even unto you; believe and doubt not the words of holy Scripture, and these are the words of Christ, even God, for I say unto you "*where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.*"\*

And now you are requested most especially to note, that whilst you are allowed the Christian privilege of an appeal to GOD the FATHER, who is always more ready to hear than you are to pray for a fulfilment of a certain promise given in the words and person of the Son of God, JESUS CHRIST, as the ONE immaculate, who ascended into heaven, and in the stead of his own person did send the Comforter, the HOLY GHOST, and took it upon himself to say "*I am with you*" by the *Spirit the Comforter*; then, beloved, the conclusion of this reasoning is also, that unless *you* allow JESUS CHRIST to be *verily and truly God*, whose it is as God, God being a Spirit, to be present every where, there cannot be to you, neither with you, the Divine presence, nor any divine blessing which the Divine presence has power to grant. But *you do believe* and petition in the name of Jesus. What a blessing! "*for He is faithful that promised:*"† yes, he will hear: he does know even before you ask what you have need of, and he will grant according as he has promised.

Calling therefore, as Christians, this holy faithful pro-

\* Matthew xviii. 20.

† Hebrews x. 23.

mised into action, a blessed privilege granted only to Christians, or so trusting in the Lord as by no means to doubt, you add, "*fulfil now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants:*" not, observe, the desires and petitions of all men indiscriminately, nor of the foolish, the hard-hearted, the worldly, but the requests of "*thy servants,*" because it is known and believed that those only can obtain who *worship God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ*, who are *the children of the Father*; who may be prodigals upon the face of the earth and are willing to return to the Father's house: they are the righteous who cry, or such as are willing so to become, and the Lord heareth. And the petitions and desires of the servants of God, be it further noticed, are not even sought after according to the thoughts and measuring of even these, the servants of God, but "*as may be most expedient for them:*" thus leaving the whole of that which shall be best in the end, within the purpose, compass, and understanding of God over all. To which you further say, "*Grant us,*" thy servants in this world, knowledge of thy truth, which is the knowledge of Christ, for *I am the truth* said he, viz, it is the all-sufficient understanding of God's holy will, and the way to perfect the execution of it in as large a measure of the fullest capacity left for mankind to perfect it in: it is that *you* may be alive to, and animated with, the faith of Christ—the righteousness which is of God by faith, that *you* "*may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death,*"\* before you go hence. And lastly you request and pray that in the world to come you may possess "*life everlasting;*" which in truth must be your portion in one sense

\* Philippians iii. 10.

of its meaning, viz, because the soul dieth not, and therefore that *your* soul and the souls of all mankind shall live in eternity, and not be as though they had never been ; for it is written, "*Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world :*" and "*unto them on the left hand, Depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire :*"\* but your asking is for that life everlasting wherein you shall see God as he is ; where *you* shall be in that kingdom which is of God, in heaven, amongst the holy, the righteous, the meek, the humble, as little children, crowned with glory ineffable and eternal, *for of such is the kingdom of God.* And now not venturing to question the validity and earnestness with which *you*, as one of those two or three, or more, who have assembled in order to make supplication to the LORD ALMIGHTY for such special purposes as have been brought before you : do you, by your faith and works, by this evidence and the conviction of your conscience feel entitled to indulge in that satisfaction which, before all other things, can afford the earnest of hope, viz, the satisfaction of being upon such grounds, that you are amongst "the servants of God ?" If not, in vain have you offered this prayer for yourself, inasmuch as it pertains to "the servants of God" alone. However, be not faint in well-doing, but henceforward, with the Lord's help, be rich in good works out of love for God ; because, it is presumed and believed, that you are willing now to do your duty towards and trust in God the Father, in God the Son, and in God the Holy Ghost. *Pray* therefore, and continue to pray ; and remember to look back to the Confes-

\* Matthew xxv. 34, 41.

sion, wherein you read these words, "*and grant, O most merciful Father, for Christ's sake, that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life:*" make this your own desire, that at the last *you* may be a child of God—an inheritor of the everlasting kingdom of glory : yes, pray, for time is passing away, and the things of this world will leave you if you do not withdraw from them. *Pray*, for prayer is the first step for the working out of your faith with fear and trembling. *Amen.*

Finally, a quotation from St. Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians draws your thoughts to the direct conclusion of the Morning and Evening Services of Prayer; for although other prayers have been introduced, called "Prayers and Thanksgivings upon several occasions, to be used before the two final prayers of the Liturgy, or Morning and Evening Prayer," yet because these are prayers, some of them in use upon very particular occasions only, and others introduced to give complete effect to the Form of the Liturgy of the Church of England and Ireland: for such reasons all comment upon them will be passed over for the present, before the spirit of the two Collects, viz, the second and third Collects for the Evening Service have been noted; which done, the Benedictory Prayer will be treated of after the same manner, and so the Morning and Evening Services perfected for your observance.

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## THE SECOND COLLECT AT EVENING PRAYER.

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THIS Collect is here taken into consideration for the above assigned reasons, and again essentially to make you

think of the place in which you, as well as others, are assembled in presence of the Holy Spirit of God, there to perform the spiritual duty of prayer; and hence *you*, in direct terms and with the boldness and assurance which the Christian Spirit warrants, now apply to God saying, O GOD: and as a Christian *you* can rely upon it that this GOD, through JESUS CHRIST, to whom you apply, is your GOD, and comprehended by you as the TRINITY IN UNITY; for Christians, who are embodied in the true faith, never view their God in any lesser light; and your faith being established and confirmed in the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity, you can acknowledge, from the sincerest convictions of your reason, that it is from *God that all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed*. And how deeply does this confession humble that exalted condition of your reason which builds you up to think that you can do of yourself things worthy and acceptable before the Lord God; for according to the tenor of this prayer there is no good in you either to will or to do. Dost *thou* believe these things? Do you really believe that the God of all, the CREATOR, made the first man perfect, and that mankind having fallen, GOD alone, the Holy Restorer of mankind, by the new birth unto righteousness, can grant any degree or state of perfection? But read, "*There is none righteous: — there is none that understandeth*"\*—"Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts"†—"It is not in man — to direct his steps"‡—"All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the Lord weigheth the spirits"§—"God saw that the wickedness of man was great — and that every imagination of the

\* Romans iii, 10, 11. † Matthew xv. 19. ‡ Jeremiah x. 23.

§ Proverbs xvi. 2.

*thoughts of his heart was only evil.*"\* Therefore is it that neither holy desires, good counsels, nor just works can arise out of man in his own imagination; but these good things are established of old, by the holiest and wisest of men, to be from the Lord; thus with him is "*the spirit of counsel*"†—and "*I [the LORD] counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire*"‡—"Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God"§—"How can ye, being evil, speak good things?"||—"For there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not"\*\*\*—"Without me ye can do nothing"††—"When I would do good, evil is present with me"‡‡—"What I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I."§§ Thus is the prayer before you, founded upon the word of God, and hence you will deem it necessary to say, not even without the deepest humility, *give unto thy servants*, and those who are truly desirous: for the Almighty accepts the reasonable requests of man offered humbly to him, and will give to them that ask him *that peace which the world cannot give*—the origin of all peace, true and satisfactory consolation of a mind reconciled to God, and powerful in the subordination of worldly thoughts; the peace which is of God by and through HIS SPIRIT—"peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,"||| that your heart may be set to obey his commandments, viz, be gifted and from choice have a will to obey all, not any part or portion of one or more of the commandments, and according to any favored ver-

\* Genesis vi. 5. † Isaiah xi. 2. ‡ Revelations iii. 18.

§ Romans xii. 2. || Matthew xii. 34. \*\* Ecclesiastes vii. 20.

†† John xv. 5. ‡‡ Romans vii. 21. §§ Romans vii. 15.

||| Romans i. 7.



sion you may choose to put upon them, and in accordance with *your* condition in life or your worldly affections, omitting the real version of them as applicable to your own infirmities, and remembering also that command which the Lord and Master of Christians laid upon his people as obligatory to Himself—“*This do in remembrance of me*”\* in such due obedience under the Holy Spirit of peace, being defended from the fear of your enemies : every one (as well as the congregation) may hope, with the greatest confidence, to *pass his time*, as you all pray to do, viz, that portion which remains of your natural existence, *in rest and quietness* ; after this manner having a conscience void of offence towards God and man through the merits of JESUS CHRIST your SAVIOUR. Wherefore having requested these great and valuable favors for others as well as for yourself, make it your own concern to say, in unison with the devout, *Amen*.

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### THE THIRD COLLECT AT EVENING PRAYER.

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THIS prayer is for aid—holy, Divine aid, against all perils ; which commences with a most solemn invocation to the LORD of all power and might, as the only ONE already acknowledged to have power over all things ; and therefore power to protect the souls as well as the bodies of all mankind. The petition of the prayer is, that He, the LORD, would “*lighten the darkness*” which reigns, visible and invisible : comprehending in this sentence that darkness which is caused by the sun’s obscurity at certain

\* Luke xxii. 19.

periods, and also that spiritual darkness which is the result of the power and influence of the divine SPIRIT of the LORD being withdrawn, on account of sin, from that mental perception of truth and righteousness which the Lord has promised to bestow for this peculiar object, that mankind may reach the life everlasting. The full meaning of this part of the prayer therefore is, LORD, illuminate our minds amidst that misunderstanding of our several duties towards Thee, our neighbour, and ourselves ; illuminate us, this congregation, so that we pray, hear thy holy word and purpose to obey it ; cause the *Spirit of Thyself* to influence us wholly ; open our eyes, not unto death but, unto life eternal ; and whilst Thou dost so vastly illuminate our mental power, illuminate the hour of the approaching day with the light of that ruler of thine which thou hast set in the heavens for thy glory and to rule over the day, and thus to awaken thy servants to praise thee for the comforts and blessings of refreshing sleep.

And be it fresh in *your* memory that in the hour of darkness there are perils which may attack the body and endanger human life ; nor less perils of the reason, of the soul, which also endanger life spiritual, and so by expelling the Spirit of God, peril the very existence of the soul in the sight of God as under the immediate protection of His Holy Spirit. These thoughts therefore bring before you, that whilst you beseech the Lord to lighten your darkness and so relieve you from all dread, let it be of fire and robbers, or of those alarms common at sea or on land, occasioned by storms and tempests, and the like ; that you also beseech Him to lighten, viz, enlighten your mental capacity that it may be able to discern any approaching shipwreck of your faith from those attacks of

your spiritual enemy which rule and reign whenever the light of the Lord is removed from you ; and although the same spiritual darkness may pervade your mind and sway with equal power during the day, yet the darkness of the mind covering night, and the night covering the darkness of the mind, and furthering, from the absence of all light, the deeds of spiritual darkness, such as unbelief, impurity of thought, sins which are sought to be done when no eye beholdeth save the eye of the Lord, your prayer encompasses that holy protection which is all powerful to overcome all darkness, and will make you rest fearless under the celestial wings of the LORD of SALVATION. Pray ye therefore that the Lord may make the darkness with which you are surrounded to be light : pray ye that the power of darkness be removed far from you ; that you have no fellowship with its works ; and thus passing the darkness of all and every time of obscurity, you may learn to call upon the name of the Lord and to show forth his praise with thanksgiving : for after this manner you seek first the kingdom of God, and the promise of all things, amongst which succour from all danger, is, for your consolation.

But it is through the mercy of the Lord, for "*his tender mercies are over all his works*,"\* and it "*is great unto the heavens*"†—"God — is rich in mercy"‡ that every kind of defence comes ; and so you ask "*by thy great mercy defend us*," and the Lord hath promised it to the godly—"He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly ; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil ; — his place of defence shall be the munition of rocks : bread

\* Psalm cxlv. 9. † Psalm lvii. 10. ‡ Ephesians ii. 4.

*shall be given him; his water shall be sure:”\** and because no one deserves the least favor or tenderness from the Lord, you conclude by adding, for the love of thy only Son, JESUS CHRIST our LORD; or, in other words, your request is, defend us O LORD GOD OMNIPOTENT, who knowest that to the whole world and all things therein belongeth darkness, because thou hast shown us such great love by sending thy Son to save us; continue to thy Church the same mysterious light and love. And to this and every other prayer will not you say *Amen*? yes, doubtless: *Amen*.

After this manner have all the Prayers of the Morning and Evening Services of the Liturgy of the Church of England and Ireland been brought under the notice of the reader, according as it is set forth for the use of the visible Church, or for those who acknowledge themselves to be members of its faith and discipline, in order that the thoughts, the minds, of those who would wish to serve God with true piety and humble zeal may become the Israel of God, as the people and church of God, or those who serve him to the best of their strength and ability, and thus are counted of the invisible Church of the MOST HIGH, and members of that Holy Catholic Church which reigns, thanks be to God the FATHER of the same holy body, throughout the world. So far then all the Prayers have been commented upon, with the exception of that which is called the Benedictory Prayer of St. Paul, as found in II Cor. xiii. 14, containing in the fewest words (which every child and member of every Christian congregation should have by heart,) all that a true and faithful Minister and servant of the LORD JESUS could wish and desire for

\* Isaiah xxxiii. 15, 16.

the prosperity of the Church at Corinth: and what are the contents of the blessing which that Apostle has bequeathed to the believer at Corinth, who was so miraculously converted from Heathenism to the faith of Christ? and, mark ye, whatsoever things were given and bestowed by way of benediction to the members of that Church, being handed down to us, are for ourselves—the Church of Christ at the present day: the contents are, in the truth of Christ as follows; the holy power, protection, guidance, keeping, in short, the blessing of blessings of the LORD JESUS CHRIST—GOD, even the SAVIOUR, and the only Saviour of mankind; for void of that belief which acknowledges Jesus Christ to be the Saviour of mankind, as far as ever has come to the knowledge of Christians, there can be no salvation of any kind arising from mercy, compassion, or omnipotence, therefore this blessing is first set forth: secondly, the love of God, always manifest, as made known by Moses, even in the beginning of the first man's actions, when the LORD GOD observed his guilt—“*What is this that thou hast done?*” words of lenity rather than of asperity: and again the Lord in the midst of judgment remembering mercy, said, “*I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it [the seed of the woman,] shall bruise thy head, [that of the serpent, the devil,] and thou shalt bruise his heel.*”<sup>\*</sup> and this was fulfilled at the birth of Christ, the Saviour, who was born of a virgin—“*Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and thou shalt call his name Immanuel*”<sup>†</sup>—(God with us:) by such means God overcoming the flesh: the love of God thus manifest in the beginning has continued ever since, for the rain hath come down upon the just

\* Genesis iii. 15.

† Isaiah vii. 14.

and the unjust, and the same love is now, "*for in Him we live, and move, and have our being;*"\* and Christ in his victory over sin has brought down his love—the love of God for the benefit of ourselves. Behold then the love of God over the souls and bodies of mankind from the creation to the present moment, and it is not confined to time, no, it reaches into eternity, for Christ is the first fruits of the resurrection, that we might not all sleep the sleep of eternal death. What greater depth of affection could the Apostle exhibit than the wish and grant of such love. Thirdly, the *fellowship of the Holy Ghost*, viz, the mighty and immediate power of the SPIRIT of God, in all his influential exercise by his communion with the mind or reasoning faculty, within which, be it remembered, originate all our thoughts and actions, so that if *you*, as a Christian, in *your* prayers, for some desire there must be of heavenly affections, and this desire assumes the model of prayer, if *you* seek the *kingdom of God*, and the *Spirit of God* descends to be in communion with *your* spirit, then have you the power to think and to do the will of God; therefore none can stand in so high estimation, either of God or man, as those who are the children and servants of God, and such are those who have the Spirit of God in communion with their Spirits; it could not be in all human conception, nor could it have been without the blessing of God that St. Paul added, the *fellowship of the Holy Ghost*, as the completion and evidence of the *love of God*, and the *grace of the Lord Jesus* might be with them, all the Church in Corinth. If, however, the Apostle was so desirous of such evidence of the *grace*, the *love*, the *fellowship* of the GOD OF TRINITY

\* Acts xvii. 28.

IN UNITY, for the good and christian keeping of others, how came such refined feelings into his breast if he had not received the same for the holy consolation of himself? "*but by the grace of God* [says he,] *I am what I am,*"\* a perfect recognition and confession of unmerited blessing—the jewel of high price as received by himself. Now then let the bearing of this matter be confirmed by Scripture as relates to this Apostle, and from the confirmation itself let the inference be drawn, that the blessing with which St. Paul was blessed he was able to bestow in the name of Christ for the benediction of the Church, and that the Church is but one Church, although at that period bearing the various names of the Church at Rome, Corinth, Philippi, or Ephesus, or elsewhere; so is it but one Church at this hour; and hence the same holy benediction may descend upon *us* who are of the *Catholic Church of Christ*, called, however, the Church of England and Ireland.

Here then first the *grace of our Lord Jesus Christ* towards Paul the Apostle is to be established from holy Scripture. To accomplish this it must be remembered that St. Paul was brought up and educated as a Jew—taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers and was zealous toward God, viz, according to the Jewish religion, and from this state of darkness he was converted by a voice saying unto him "*Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?*" and that voice gave this assertion, "*I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest.*"† This was the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ manifested towards this Apostle. Touching the *love of God* as evinced to the Apostle during the arduous work of the conversion

\* 1 Corinthians xv. 10.      † Acts xxii. 7, 8.

of the Gentiles with which he was charged, scarcely can there be enumerated a stronger personal instance than that in Acts xxiii. 10; 11, when "*the chief captain fearing lest Paul should have been pulled in pieces* [such was his danger from the Scribes,] *the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, be of good cheer, Paul;*" and in one other instance not less in love, it is recorded that during the tempest on Paul's passage to Rome, in his own words, "*There stood by me this night the angel of God, — saying, Fear not, Paul: —* [and to encourage him, the angel also said] *God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.*"\* And with reference to the fellowship of the Holy Ghost bestowed upon the Apostle, we read "*When it pleased God, who called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in* [or by] *me.*"† Again, "*It came to pass — I was in a trance: and saw him* [the Lord,] *saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me. — Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.*"‡ These and the former quotations, for they are applicable to the same purpose, fully prove the fellowship of the Holy Ghost with the Apostle; and no further evidence can be necessary to make good that St. Paul was conscious within himself of "*the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost,*" as an Apostle of his GOD, his LORD, his MASTER.

The ground thus described and taken possession of establishes likewise the apostleship of St. Paul, so that he being a messenger, an ambassador of the Gospel, fully accredited by God, was completely and most justifiably authorized and empowered, as far as man can ob-

\* Acts xxvii. 23, 24. † Gal. i. 15, 16. ‡ Acts xxii. 17, 18, 21.



tain Divine permission and consent in a direct communion from the Lord God, to wish and desire, and to grant *"the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost"* for the benefit of any Christian Church, and this he himself thought and believed he had power to do, and he did act upon it as the following passages of Scripture will also prove. Thus to the Church at Rome St. Paul says *"the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you."*\* The same is the benediction to the Church at Corinth. To the Church in Galatia St. Paul writes, *"Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit."*† And in more expanded terms does the Apostle bless the Church at Ephesus—*"Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen."* To the Church at Philippi the Apostle bestows many blessings, and one particularly—*"the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."*‡ To that at Colosse—*"Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ."* To that at Thessalonica he uses the same terms.§ To Timothy he writes—*"Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord."* To Titus he uses the same form, adding, *"our Saviour"* To Philemon much the same words are written.|| And to the Hebrews he says, *"Now the God of peace, — make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."\*\**

\* 1 Corinthians xvi. 23. † Galatians vi. 18. ‡ Philippians iv. 7.  
§ 1 Thessalonians i. 1. || Philemon 3. \*\* Hebrews xiii. 20, 21.

Such was the Divine authority for the Benedictory Prayer upon which these observations are made, and such the basis on which St. Paul blesses the members of those Churches, whom he would should receive the holy and fruitful effects of his benediction. As for ourselves of the Christian Church of England and Ireland, without entering upon the point of Apostolic Succession, which, alas! many think and account of as of no worth nor consequence (and it would fill a volume to enter into that question), besides many learned Divines have published most able works upon that head, which *you* and every member of the Church would do well to read and study; but in this place, in preference, taking another position, viz, that of the common consent of every christian congregation, which allows the Minister, who is set apart and ordained to bless, and also receives from the same the blessing as descending and bestowed from God—from JESUS CHRIST—from the HOLY GHOST: this very common consent *received from and handed down by* the Churches to whom St. Paul wrote, as has been quoted, through the earliest Christian Churches founded and in succession, to and for the use, and receipt, and profit of our own congregations of Christians this common consent, as in the case of Nations, so of Churches, corroborates and sanctions the use, aye, if we may apply the term, sanctifies the benediction upon yourselves, the members of the Church of England and Ireland. The subjects upon which it was proposed to reason in support of the present use of the Benedictory Prayer being thus brought to a close, nothing more is left to be written but the application of the text, 11 Corinthians .xiii. 14, with its essential

points to *you*, and others of every congregation, who are dismissed by your Minister with those words.

The text then is a prayer which the Minister sends forth to the throne of God, as the only God, who heareth the prayers of the people whom he hath blessed with the knowledge of Christianity; a prayer in truth and purpose to the effect that the whole and perfect operation and influence of the knowledge which has been brought to light by the revelation of Jesus Christ, and the essential and complete benediction of God, and the perfect and powerful influence of the Holy Spirit, all these being the same Spirit, "*for there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit — [and all] worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, — [and] it is the same God which worketh all in all;*"\* and God is a Spirit; and the HOLY SPIRIT, which is the HOLY GHOST, is God; and this God is the God of Christians, God Ever, the ONE BEING IN TRINITY and TRINITY IN UNITY, overshadowing all things, and especially mankind, to whom God hath bestowed that power, reason, by which, aided by the same Spirit, "*the invisible things of God from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.*"†

Do you then (it is time to inquire,) feel assured of that Power divine, that Holy Spirit of God, in his operations so as to stand in the sight of that Power upon such a step of the knowledge of your God as to hope for and be entitled, as the child of God, to receive the unlimited, merciful, everlasting, all-sufficient "*grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy*

\* 1 Corinthians xii. 4. 6. 11.      † Romans i. 20.

*Ghost*," which the Minister, at the conclusion of the Morning and Evening Service, pronounces for your present and future salvation? Yes, you do. "*O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! — For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things.*"\* and these things are thine according to the measure of thy faith and the blessing with which thou art blessed, for grace, mercy, and truth, are thine in Christ Jesus. *Amen.*

With what devout awe and reverence then ought the congregation to hearken to the words of St. Paul, "*the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with us all,*" when uttered by the Minister. With what godly sincerity should *they*, every one, from the least to the greatest, join in that word of consent, *Amen.* The words are, remember, the last of this portion of the Morning and Evening Service as formerly in use: and although another blessing follows, either after the Sermon or after the Communion Service (wherein there is absolutely required uniformity), yet you cannot be too thankful to God Almighty for every blessing, who with all his power is all merciful; neither can you be a partaker of his blessing in too large a share, nor receive it too frequently from your Minister. In union with the above observations you may with great correctness be reminded of the utter want of due regard to the service itself, the actual and positive improvidence (it may be called) to the special influence of this prayer in particular, not merely to the words but to this prayer and the spirit of the prayer itself, when any one is induced to leave the congregation before the conclusion of the service under any pretence whatever (except illness or the most urgent con-

\* Romans xi. 33, 36.

cerns), because how greatly do such movements dissipate all heavenly desires, all piety, all religion; and whosoever so doeth *"his mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate."*\*

And how little do many Christians reflect upon, in truth many think not one iota of that attention and silence, that sobriety of behaviour, that humility of mind and body, that becoming decency, which every one should feel who enters the House of Prayer, during any part of the service, for therein is God invoked and called upon to hear and be present. How little do many regard the service then proceeding the moment they enter. Yet meditate *thou* upon these things which should accompany the whole compass of thy mind, the whole frame of thy body when there, where two or three are gathered together to receive *"the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost."*

One other particular should not be overlooked, one which lies so deeply and is so naturally imbedded amongst those and other duties christian parents have to perform towards their offspring, that duty which is to be the nucleus and rule of the steady, obedient, and pious Christian, when the babe in Christ shall be able to partake of the stronger food of the Gospel; that parental duty of instructing children to observe more than ordinary rule in silent quiet demeanor whilst in that house, wherein not only their natural parents may and should be present, if possible, (were it only for the sake of example,) but where the Parent of all is to be adored, that most HOLY ONE, which is to be their guide and consolation through life: for be it well noticed, that through the

\* Psalm vii. 16.

negligence of the regular and wholesome performance of this parental duty of *praying with the congregation*, has that untoward and disgraceful disregard to all sacred duties originated and grown up to the great reproach of the Christian Church.

Mark ye well likewise, although many have been the observations made in allusion to the meaning, the proper use, of the word *Amen*, that were it obligatory, for conscience sake, to repeat aloud the word *Amen* by every person present, how vivid, how animated would become the whole congregation. Looking indeed to the present dulness and apathy of congregations, *as for our harps we hanged them up*,\* were the *Amen* uttered with any attention, much more so with alertness, the words of the Psalmist would come unto you with effect—“*If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.*”†—Like “*as the hart desireth the water brooks, so longeth my soul after thee.*”‡—“*O God, thou art my God.*”§—“*I will cry unto God with my voice, even unto God will I cry with my voice; and he shall hearken unto me.*”||

And for a conclusion, keep always before you that whenever you are with the congregation to perform or partake of any divine service, you, with others, have made that building called the Church, the *House of God*; that the *Minister* is there as the representative on earth of the Ministers who are before God in heaven. That your prayers cannot be heard except your heart be in that service which you would perform, and trust in the more perfect

\* Psalm cxxxvii. 2. † Psalm cxxxvii. 5, 6. ‡ Psalm xlii. 1.

§ Psalm lxiii. 1. || Psalm lxxvii. 1.

view and understanding of the Christian's duty, it is one of the greatest privileges which God has granted to mankind, to be where He is.

"THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE LOVE OF GOD, AND THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE HOLY GHOST, BE WITH US ALL EVERMORE." *Amen.*

END OF THE  
MORNING AND EVENING PRAYER.





